CONTRIBUTIONS TO IQBAL'S THOUGHT

Dr. Mohammed Maruf



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Edited with Introduction
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PREFACE

This book, comprising papers from my friends and colleagues from the Department of Philosophy, Government College, Lahore, is a humble tribute to the great genius of Dr. Muhammad Iqbal, a distinguished student and a celebrated teacher of this department on the auspicious occasion of his birth Centenary. He was not only a great poet, but also a great thinker who conceived the idea of Pakistan, our dear motherland.

In the compilation of this book I am very much indebted to my friends and colleagues who have made invaluable contributions towards it. I am also deeply indebted to Prof. Fizaur Rehman, Principal of the College, for his encouragement and patronage.

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INTRODUCTION

Dr. Muhammad Iqbal is a great thinker of the Muslim world. He holds a very prominent place among the whole line of the Muslim philosophers, though his place is unique in so far as the current century is concerned, for there is hardly any contemporary Muslim thinker who can match with him. This amply accounts for the high and prestigious position he enjoys, not only among the Muslims of the Sub-continent, but throughout the world of Islam. He is not only a great Muslim thinker, but also one of the most notable philosophers in the world today, because very few philosophers have exercised so deep and vast an impact on their contemporary world. Though he expressed his thought through poetry also, he is basically a philosopher; poetry being only a medium of expression with him, and he nowhere claims to be a poet. On the contrary, he has denied it sometimes,

میری نوائے پریشاں کو شاعری نہ سمجھ
کہ میں ہوں محرم راز درون میخانہ

Moreover, in him the poet and the philosopher are not separate; they are the warp and woof of his very personality. However, both poetry and philosophy are means with him; the ultimate aim being life and religion. To Iqbal, religion, philosophy and higher

poetry deal with the same problems, though their respective approaches and methods differ. That is why he is rightly called the philosopher of life and action, and is one of the important vitalists of his own times.

Iqbal, however, was not a philosopher in the sense of a system-builder like Plato. He never purported to give a system of thought, although there is a complete system in his thought. Unlike the Greek masters, Iqbal did not philosophise with a view to erecting big edifice on the basis of pure 'idea' or 'thought'. Philosophy has been fulfilling different functions with different times and circumstances. It has been carrying out the demands made on it by its time and circumstance. Consequently, a philosopher has been playing varying roles with changing requirements of his time. But his fundamental role or function has always remained unchanged, i.e., criticism and evaluation. When Iqbal came, the philosopher had discovered his fundamental function of a critic and a seer. It was to examine critically the available material in various fields, on the one hand ; and to scrutinize the prevailing conditions, diagonise ills resulting from those conditions, and prescribe remedies for them, on the other. In this sense, a philosopher is a doctor and a seer. And it is in this sense that Iqbal declared towards the end of his life :

سر آمد روزگار ایں فقیرے
دگر دانائے راز آید کہ ناید !

He describes himself variously as 'the knower of secret', 'the restless soul', etc., and decries his being a poet in the common sense.

Iqbal's mission is comparable to that of al-Ghazali and Rumi in the Muslim world, and to that of Kant, Nietzsche and Russell in the Western world. Like al-Ghazali and Kant, he is aware of the limitations of reason. He agrees with them that reason by itself cannot solve human problems, as it can take man up to a certain limit beyond which it will fail him. This was Kant's conclusion whereto his critical enquiries into the intellectual capacities of man in his famous *Critique of Pure Reason* led him, and he ended in a sceptical note. Al-Ghazali, disillusioned by the capacities and powers of reason, relinquished it altogether and plunged into the ocean of mysticism in his search for reality. Iqbal, in the company of Rumi, though recognising the limitations of reason, acknowledges its importance as a source of knowledge. But Iqbal leaves his Persian guide behind when he stresses upon the complementary nature of thought and intuition, which must fuse together to yield a complete 'vision' of the real. Iqbal's analysis of thought is more thorough and comprehensive.

Iqbal does not agree with Freud and Russell that the salvation of man lies in reason. Over-rationalism and excessive intellectualism have engendered materialism and atheism, and Nietzsche was divine in

proclaiming that the banishment of faith and its cognate values had left man with only one single value, i.e., power. Iqbal, agreeing with his German contemporary, regrets that "wholly overshadowed by the result of his intellectual activity, the modern man has ceased to live soulfully, i.e., from within. In the domain of thought he is living in open conflict with himself; and in the domain of economic and political life he is living in open conflict with others. He finds himself unable to control his ruthless egoism and his infinite gold-hunger which is gradually killing all higher striving in him and bringing him nothing but life-weariness". In *Javid Nama* he says:

شعله افرنگیان نم خورده ایست
چشم شان صاحب نظر دل مرده ایست!

and again,

عصر حاضر را خرد زنجیر پاست
اشتراک از دین و ملت برده تاب؛

Due to over-intellectualism, the West has lost the 'inner spark', the 'restless soul', and its 'heart' is dead. He regrets that the East, following in the footsteps of the West, has also lost that 'inner spark', that fraternity and faith, which are the very spirit of Islamic teachings. Iqbal says:

مشرق از سلطانی مغرب خراب
اشتراک از دین و ملت برده تاب!

Nietzsche was a seer who could analyse the situation of the West. He could divine the ills of the West, no doubt, but failed to prescribe remedies. It was

because, following the Kantian tradition he could not go beyond reason or intellect, because of the materialistic and atheist background which he could not leave behind. That is why Iqbal says of him,

قلب او مومن دماغش کافر است

Iqbal, against him, has the advantage of a solid spiritual heritage in the Eastern wisdom. In him we find a beautiful blend of the wisdom of the East and the West, not found in Kant, Nietzsche, Freud and Russell.

Iqbal not only divined the causes of the ills, he also proceeded to prescribe remedies for them. He was not a misologist ; he rather assigned to reason its proper place. He recommended a balancing of reason and faith. To him, neither reason nor faith alone can reach the real ; what can help man is a true fusion of the two. The modern world by its exclusive reliance on reason, has come to the verge of catastrophe, an explosive situation, which can be salvaged only through a right amalgamation of reason and intuition. The wisdom of the East and the West are both one-sided and incomplete. As Iqbal says,

غربیان را زیرکی ساز حیات
شرقیان را عشق راز کائنات

He goes on to add,

زیرکی از عشق گردد حق شناس
کار عشق از زیرکی محکم اساس
عشق چون با زیرکی همبر شود
نقشبند عالم دیگر شود

and this fusion of 'ishq' and 'aql' has been taught only by the Quran. Thus, the remedy for the ills of the world today lies in following the teachings of the Quran, which decries bifurcation between the Church and the State, between mind and body, between matter and spirit; and offers a gestalt view of reality. Following the Quran, Iqbal apprises three sources of knowledge, i.e., Nature, History and Qalb, and believes that these three must combine in order to yield a complete and full illumination of reality.

Iqbal's philosophy can well be described as both eclectic and encyclopaedic. It is eclectic because it partakes of the wisdom of the East and the West. It is the meeting-place of both, that is why it is more universal in scope than any other philosophy. He was well acquainted with the philosophical systems of the West, originating in the Greece Islands and through to the present times (i.e. 1938 when he died). On the other hand, he was well-versed in the Eastern wisdom, including Indian systems of thought and Muslim philosophy. As a result, in him we find a good blend of philosophy and mysticism, which makes his thought both 'inward' and 'outward', both rational and non-rational. In him all the various aspects of thought are found unified into a single, coherent whole. This makes his philosophy truly eclectic. Then, it expresses itself in a variety of fields and directions ; i.e., in morals, in politics, in economic and social spheres, in religion and meta-

physics, and so on. Where he discusses such metaphysical concepts as space, time, self or ego, Ultimate Reality; he also discusses such social and political ideas as democracy, nationalism, and community. This makes his philosophy truly encyclopaedic. Thus, his philosophy betrays two very important aspects of a truly great philosophy, I mean, eclectic and encyclopaedic aspects.

In this collection entitled *Contributions to Iqbal's Thought*, an attempt has been made to present, as truly and closely as possible, the views of our great national thinker Dr. Muhammad Iqbal, on a variety of important concepts and subjects. Each contributor has put in his best to propound some aspect of Iqbal's thought, in its purest form without entering into unnecessary comparisons and side-tracks. The book has been compiled with the point in view that much has usually been said on Iqbal in comparison with other thinkers, but very little on Iqbal's own ideas, stripped of all comparisons.

Iqbal's Philosophy of Knowledge

Iqbal's philosophy, in any aspect, has knowledge for its foundation. He conceives of knowledge after the model of perception, and tries to present religious knowledge also on the same pattern, shorn off all mysterious and weird tinge, usually imposed on it, and which is responsible for obscurantism in religion. In the present article the author has brought home to the reader this important aspect of human knowledge, basing it on his doctoral research on "Iqbal's Philosophy of Knowledge". (*Editor*)

Iqbal's Philosophy of Knowledge has a special significance to his whole philosophical thought. It is the very foundation of his whole system, a fact which has very often been overlooked by his critics and commentators. Too much stress has usually been laid on his philosophy of ego, forgetting that even his concept of ego is based on the feeling of 'I am-ness' which is nothing but knowledge. Thus, whatever aspect of his thought we take, it is ultimately grounded in the philosophy of knowledge that Iqbal, at least, implicitly upheld. This philosophy is to be dug out from his writings, because he

never pretended to offer a theory of knowledge (he was not an epistemologist) ; he rather, accepting the prevalent views on epistemological problems, and drawing inspiration from the Qur'an which lays great emphasis on knowledge, bases his moral, metaphysical and religious ideas on them. Iqbal extends the acknowledged principles of epistemology to the realm of religious knowledge, which to me is his main contribution in that field, and a very important contribution, of course. I am going to discuss his views on knowledge as explicitly as possible in the following pages.

It may be stated at the outset that to Iqbal, taking inspiration from the Qur'an, the main purpose of knowledge is to arouse in man the consciousness of his relationships with God and the Universe, and make him understand that the Universe is 'the habit of Allah ;'[1] a phrase he borrows from the Qur'an. These relationships are established through knowledge, and it is herein that the importance of knowledge lies. Again, to Iqbal knowledge is no mere intellectual luxury as maintained by some of the modern epistemologists.

Iqbal agrees with Kant that knowledge is 'sense-perception elaborated by understanding'.[2] That is, human knowledge has two aspects—viz. (i) the data

1. Allama Iqbal, *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, p. 56.

2. Ibid., p. 12.

'identical with life'.[7] In its discursive sense, thought creates an unbridgeable gulf between the ideal and the real ; but if we 'take thought not as a principle which organizes and interprets its material from outside, but as a potency which is formative of the very being of its material',[8] then it is 'not alien to the original nature of things'; it is organically related to intuition, as thought is to its material, and the rift between 'head' and 'heart' is resolved for good. Thought is not only organically related to intuition, it is, according to Iqbal, a facet of the same light of which intuition is the other facet. As Iqbal says of thought in *Gulshan-i-Raz-i-Jadid* :

من او را نور دیدم نار دیدم!
گہے نارش زبرهان و دلیل است
گہے نورش زجان جبرئیل است[9]

This may be called 'non-discursive' sense of thought. Here the question may be asked whether thought, in any sense, can be formative of its own material. However, I am not concerned with this question here. In the sense under discussion, thought organizes its material, not from outside, but from within its own nature ; and it is, perhaps, because the faculty of religious data is not some external source like any of the sense organs, but the internal source called 'heart' or 'qalb'. It is not a mysterious faculty, as sometimes conceived,[10] but a normal source of knowl-

7. Op. cit., p. 52.
8. Ibid., p. 31.
9. *Zabur-i-Ajam*, pt. II, p. 148.
10. *The Reconstruction*, p. 16.

edge among other sources which are Nature and History.[11] These two sources present the external view of Reality, while Qalb affords the vision of its very internal nature. The material thus afforded is the finest as compared with that arising from the other sources, the external sources. To further bring home the variance between the two movements of thought, Iqbal differentiates between two aspects of the human self, viz. efficient and appreciative aspects.[12] He is reluctant to agree with a majority of the Western philosophers who maintain that thought is totally absent from religious knowledge. Herein lies Iqbal's important contribution to philosophy of religion. Of late, writers like Nels F. S. Ferre in his *Reason in Religion* (1963), have begun to recognise the role of reason in religion, but that is quite recently. In some sense Iqbal has played the pioneer in advocating the role of thought in religion, and a very important role.

Again, Iqbal disagrees with a whole tradition of non-Muslim mystics and some of the sufis too, though right in the main line of Sufism, who held that in religious knowledge the very being of the subject was absorbed in the being of object—the state of 'fana'. One may have to pass through this stage, as Iqbal himself says

> 'lose yourself a little while in this sea profound.' (*Javid Nama*, V. 1224) ;

11. Op. cit,, p. 127.

12. Ibid., p. 47.

but it is for the higher aim of achieving 'baqa'. The character of man's knowledge, as Iqbal stresses, is conceptual,[13] which means that the difference between subject and object is retained in all forms of human knowledge. He emphasizes the practical nature of human knowledge. The real aim of knowledge being consciousness of man's relationships with God and the world, true knowledge should aim at developing the personality and individuality of the knower rather than obliterate it. It should render the ego insoluble, and that form of it which teaches 'hulul' and abnegation of the self as the final end is, according to Iqbal, sham and spurious. He emphatically says, 'The end of the ego's quest is not emancipation from the limitations of individuality; it is, on the other hand, a more precise definition of it.'[14] Iqbal has the model of the Holy Prophet before him as the ideal Personality achieved through the deepest knowledge amenable to mankind. To endorse this point he quotes the following verse :

> 'Moses lost his consciousness only on seeing a glimpse of God's attributes,
>
> You (the Prophet of Islam) saw the very being of God in Meraj with a smile on your lips.[15]

In this verse a beautiful comparison, between the pre-Islamic mysticism with its ideal of 'fana' and the truly Islamic ideal of 'baqa', has been presented.

13. Op. cit., p. 13. 14. Ibid., p. 198.
15. Ibid., Q. p. 118 (Eng. Tr. is my own).

Iqbal in his *Javid Nama* still more emphatically says,

'That man alone is real who dares—
Dares to see God face to face ![16]

and again,

'No one stands unshaken in His Presence ;
And he who can, verily, he is pure gold'.[17]

Iqbal further claims that religious knowledge is no less objective and critical than scientific knowledge. He sets aside all those who reject this experience as a mere mass of subjectivity. The subjectivists, including the modern positivists, erroneously try to relegate religious knowledge either to mere emotive expressions (like A. J. Ayer[18]), or to statements of psychological facts (like W. D. Glasgow and C. B. Martin[19]). They deny any cognitive significance to them. Iqbal's reply to all such positions is that the sense of objectivity of a religious scholar is no less keen than that of a scientist in his own sphere. The former is not content with a plethora of subjective and anthropomorphic contents of his own mind.[20] Again, while talking of Islam in particular, he urges that in order to secure a wholly non-emotional experience 'the technique of Islamic Sufism at least takes good care to forbid the use of music in worship'[21] and emphasiz-

16. Op. cit., Q. p. 198 (Iqbal's own Eng. Tr.).

17. Ibid., Q. p. 198. 18. *Loigcal Positivism, cf. relevant Chapter.*

19. *The Journal of Philosophy*, July 1957, Vol. *XXXII*, No. 122, pp. 229 & 235.

20. Allama Iqbal, *The Reconstruction*, p. 197. 21. Ibid.

es 'the necessity of daily congregational prayers in order to counteract the possible anti-social effects of solitary contemplation'[22] Iqbal stresses the need for objectivity in religion as well as in science thus, 'Both aim at reaching the most real...And to both the way to pure objectivity lies through what may be called the purification of experience.'[23] In this passage Iqbal is talking of the identity of aim and procedure of both science and religion.

Iqbal criticises the view of the Mutazilites who took religion for a body of doctrine and urges that they ignored that religion is a 'vital act',[24] and 'took no notice of non-conceptual modes of approaching Reality and reduced religion to a mere system of logical concepts ending in a purely negative attitude. They failed to see that in the domain of knowledge—scientific or religious—complete independence of thought from concrete experience is not possible.'[25] He adds, religious knowledge is not only grounded in concrete experience, it is itself a matter of experience. In modern times, Freud tried to liken religion to 'certain dogmas, assertions about facts and conditions of external (or internal) reality, which tell one something that one has not oneself discovered and which claim that one should give them credence.[26] Iqbal rejects this view and affirms that religion in higher manifestation

22. Op. cit., p. 197.
23. Ibid., p. 196.
24. Ibid., p. 198.
25. Ibid., pp. 4, 5.
26. S. Freud, *The Future of an Illusion*, p. 43.

is 'neither dogma, nor priesthood, nor ritual,...[27] it 'is essentially experience and recognized the necessity of experience as its foundation long before science learnt to do so.'[28] Iqbal not only emphasizes the experiential nature of religion, but also that it has for its basis a genuine experience and hence is very close to the ordinary experience of everyday life. Throughout his discussion on the subject Iqbal accentuates its experiential nature and takes to analysing it. He points out that religion is 'neither mere thought, nor mere feeling, nor mere action ; it is an expression of the whole man,'[29] thus bringing home to us the concrete nature of this experience. To stress upon its richness and concreteness Iqbal quotes the experience of one Abdul Momin and the comments on that by the renowned Indian Sufi Sheikh Ahmad of Sarhand.[30] To him it is one of the richest experiences amenable to mankind.

Religious experience is not completely different from other types of experience. Iqbal faces two questions regarding this experience : (i) Is it a genuine experience capable of yielding knowledge ? (ii) How to compare this peculiar experience with sensory experience ? In answer to the first question Iqbal refers to the evidence of religious experts in all ages and countries who maintain that there are potential types of cons-

27. Allama Iqbal, Op. cit., p. 189.
28. Ibid., p. 182.
29. Ibid., p. 2.
30. Ibid., p. 193.

ciousness lying close to our normal consciousness.[31] The answer to the second question is also found in the same assertion which states that religious consciousness lies close to the normal consciousness ; that is, it is not a form of consciousness which is completely different from our normal consciousness. Iqbal in his first Lecture explicitly says that mystic's intimate association with the eternal does not mean a complete break with serial time.[32] Thus, Iqbal stresses over and again that religion is a form of consciousness among other forms, and demolishes the bifurcation usually drawn between religious and normal forms of consciousness. Iqbal, by bringing the two forms closer, has greatly contributed towards a proper understanding of the peculiar human consciousness called religious consciousness. He brings out this closeness from yet another angle when he says, 'Psychologically speaking, all states, whether their content is religious or non-religious, are organically determined'.[33] Here is another respect in which religious consciousness is cognate to other forms of consciousness.

The possibility of other levels of consciousness was vaguely seen by Spinoza in the early modern philosophy, but much more clearly by S. Freud in the first half of the present century through his concept of the unconscious processes of mind to which he attached more importance than the cons-

31. Op. cit., p. 185. 32. Ibid., p. 22. 33. Ibid., p. 21.

cious states of mind. In recent times, A. D. Woozley in his book *Theory of Knowledge* (1964) has discussed the various levels of consciousness alongwith their objects, but he has failed to see the closeness which Iqbal has appreciated, between religious and other forms of consciousness. Iqbal has disavowed the common view that religious consciousness is some special and mysterious type, at complete break with normal consciousness. While talking of Intuition or Qalb, which is the source of religious data, he expressly says that it is not to be treated as a mysterious special faculty.[34] To him, there is nothing mysterious about it; it is very much normal and amenable to man provided he acquires a certain type and degree of sensitivity. In treating it as a normal form Iqbal certainly differs with most of the writers on religion, both in the East and in the West, who take it for a special and mysterious kind. Again, while talking of the facts of religious experience, Iqbal affirms that these are 'facts among other facts of human experience',[35] and, in agreement with A. C. Ewing in one of his articles,[36] urges that they should be treated as genuine facts. Thus, there is nothing weird or mysterious either about the religious consciousness itself or about the religious facts; they are like other kinds of consciousness and other facts.

34. Op. cit., p. 16. 35. Ibid.

36. "*Religious Assertions*," *Philosophy, Vol. XXXII*, No. 122, July, 1957, p. 213.

He differs with those[37] who relegate religious states of mind to abnormal psychic fabrications.

The acme of Iqbal's attempt is reached when he brings out parallel and complementarity between religious and scientific knowledge. According to him, empirical and scientific knowledge are conducive to the spiritual uplift of man ; they are indispensable to a complete comprehension of Reality. Emphasizing the importance of science he says, 'Reality lives in its own appearances ; and such a being as man, who has to maintain his life in an obstructing environment, cannot ignore the visible'.[38] This fact has been accentuated by the Qur'an. But scientific knowledge, though necessary, is not final by itself. Criticising scientific knowledge Iqbal says, 'what is called science is not a single systematic view of Reality. It is a mass of sectional views of Reality—fragments of a total experience which do not seem to fit together'.[39] Religion, on the other hand, Iqbal says, 'demands the whole of Reality and for this reason must occupy a central place in any synthesis of all the data of human experience', and as such 'has no reason to be afraid of any sectional views of Reality'.[40] Again, there is no conflict between science and religion, as the two have their own respective domains or points of view. The two adopt different methods and interpret different kinds of data. Iqbal

37. Physiological psychologists.
38. *The Reconstruction*, p. 14.
39. Ibid., p. 41.
40. Ibid., p. 42.

points out that the alleged conflict is 'due to the misapprehension that both interpret the same data of experience'.[41] The final aim of both, however, is identical—viz. 'Both aim at reaching the most real',[42] perhaps, religion 'is far more anxious to reach the ultimately real than science'.[42] However, owing to the identity of aim the two must converge in the long run. Iqbal emphasizes this thing when he says that religious and scientific 'processes are in a sense parallel to each other',[43] rather he goes to the extent of calling them as complementary and organically related processes.

The rational faculty, it may be added, is not only interpretative, but also critical of the experience it organizes. Religious experience, Iqbal admits, no less than empirical experience is subject to the searching eye of this faculty. Iqbal on the opening pages of his *The Reconstruction* raises the question regarding the applicability of the purely rational method of philosophy to religion. He stresses the great need for a rational foundation of the ultimate principles of religion. 'Science may ignore a rational metaphysics', he says, but religion cannot afford to do so, it requires a truly rational basis to stand upon. He is looking for a rationally-based religion. However, this does not mean that religion is inferior to philosophy. As Iqbal says, 'Philosophy, no doubt, has jurisdiction to judge religion, but what is to be

41. Op. cit., p. 25. 42. Ibid., p. 196. 43. Ibid.

judged is of such a nature that it will not submit to the jurisdiction of philosophy except on its own terms'.[44] Thus, though submitting to the searching eye of reason, religion keeps up its own dignity and superiority, and refuses to be treated among the other data. But where religion needs a rational basis, reason needs more pressingly the infetuation of love and passion, but for which knowledge would become diabolical and demonish. Iqbal beautifully says in *Javid Nama*,

> '......If it be divorced from love,
> Then knowledge is but Satan's progeny ;
> But if it blends with love, it joins the ranks of high celestial spirits......'[45]

He reiterates the same thing in *Gulshan-i-Raz-i-Jadid* in the following verse,

اگر یک چشم بر بندد گناہے است
اگر با هر دو بیند شرط راہے است[46]

Love also needs the company of intelligence,

> 'when love is companioned by intelligence it has the power to design another world'.[47]

And Iqbal's concluding call is summed up in

> 'Then rise and draw the design of a new world ; mingle together love with intelligence'.[48]

Thus, to the question which the present day West is facing, 'Should we return to faith ?' because

44. Op. cit., p. 2.
45. Mahmud Ahmad, *Pilgrimage of Eternity*, p. 66.
46. *Zabur-i-Ajam*, pt. II, p. 149.
47. *Javid Nama*, (Eng. Tr.) A. J. Arberry, p. 58.
48. Ibid.

reason has brought mankind to the threshold of catastrophe, Iqbal's reply is, what the mankind needs today is a fully thought-out and rationally-based religion, rather than a return to merely dogmatic faith. He agrees with Lord Russell[49] that a return to traditional faith will not go any way to solve the problems of modern man. Iqbal rejects all obscurantist religion advocated by the orthodox. He votes for an enlightened type of religion ; religion which has behind it a sufficient rational justification.

But what does Iqbal mean by enlightened religion ? Does he mean by it something like the rational movements in religion rising in the West from time to time? To Iqbal, Islam is the truest religion, the one which can salvage humanity from its present perilous situation. By rational religion he does not mean some new religious system, something like Calvanism ; he rather means by it a complete rational understanding and justification of Islam. He regrets that in Islam religious thought has been stationary for the last 500 years, although 'search for rational foundations in Islam may be regarded to have begun with the Prophet himself'.[50] In his lecture on *The Principle of Movement in Structure of Islam*,[51] Iqbal refers to the various attempts made in India, Persia, Egypt, Turkey and other Muslim countries at rationalizing

49. Bertrand Russell, *Why I am not a Christian*, p. 169.

50. Allama Iqbal, *The Reconstruction*, p. 3.

51. Ibid., Ch. VI, pp. 146 ff.

Islam : but he regrets that they usually deviated from the basics of Islam. The reconstruction does not mean any deviation from the basic principles ; it, on the other hand, requires a full understanding of the selfsame principles with a view to erecting a rational system upon them. As Iqbal says, one of the requirements today is the 'basic principles of a universal import directing the evolution of human society on a spiritual basis',[52] and Muslims are 'in possession of these ultimate ideas on the basis of a revelation,...[53] Iqbal goes on to suggest that the Muslim of today should 'reconstruct his social life in the light of ultimate principles, and evolve, out of the hitherto partially revealed purposes of Islam, that spiritual democracy which is the ultimate aim of Islam.[54] Such a knowledge, which has been envisaged and analysed in these pages, Iqbal says, is afforded by the Qur'an, the main purpose whereof is 'to awaken in man the higher consciousness of his relation with God and the universe'.[55]

—Dr. Mohammed Maruf

52. Op. cit., p. 179.
53. Ibid.
54. Ibid., p. 180.
55. Ibid.. p. 165.

CHAPTER II

Iqbal on God's Knowledge

When it comes to a discussion on Divine Knowledge, two fundamental questions are raised : (a) 'What is the nature of God's knowledge ?' (ii) 'What is the object of His Knowledge, particulars or the universals ?' The author has treated of Iqbal's position on these questions critically, though briefly, and in some important respects the attempt is thought-provoking.

(*Editor*)

The Muslim theologians have shown considerable interest in the question of the nature and object of God's knowledge. The question regarding the object of His knowledge was the question whether He knew particulars or universals. Ibnul Arabi (560- ?) held that God knew the Universals,[1] and al-Farabi (258-339) maintained that He could know only His own essence directly and His knowledge of the universe followed logically from it.[2] On the other hand, Ibn Sina (370-428) maintained that God knew all particulars, though not perceptually, but in a "universal

1. A. E. Affifi, *The Mystical Philosophy of Muhyid Din Ibnul Arabi*, p.106.
2. M. M. Sharif, (ed.) *A History of Muslim Philosophy*, pp. 610-11.

way", on the ground that perception in God would lead to his changeability.[3] Criticizing the position of Ibn Sina, al-Ghazali (450-505) contended that such a view presupposed the intellectualistic-deterministic world view and would suggest 'a block universe such as makes little allowance, if any at all, even for the exercise of God's will.[4] His criticism, however, was based on a misunderstanding of the philosopher's views. Ibn Rushd (520-595) resorted to a negative position when, discussing the attributes of God in general, he urged that his attributes were beyond human comprehension as they were in the sphere of the unknowable.[5] Iqbal, in our own times, also showed sufficient interest in this traditional question, discussing it to some extent in his famous Lectures.[6]

In discussing this problem Iqbal is facing two questions :

(i) What is the relationship between God and the universe ?

(ii) How to reconcile God's omnipotence and omniscience ?

Iqbal's whole theory develops through an answer to these two questions. Iqbal denies that God created the universe and then withdrew to a distance. This is contrary to the Quranic position that God is ever creating new forms and thereby expanding the uni-

3. Op. cit., pp. 502, 608-10.
4. Ibid., p. 610.
5. Ibid., p. 549.
6. *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, Ch. III, p. 65ff.

verse. Again, it would lead to the notion of a universe confronting God and limiting him. Iqbal holds that God and the universe are organically related, a relationship which he expresses by saying that "Nature is to the Divine Self as character is to the human self."[7] This brings out the closeness of relationship between God and the universe : the two, though distinct, are not mutually exclusive and independent. Thus, God and the universe are not two distinct entities and, as Iqbal says, the universe is "a fleeting moment in the life of God."[8]

This brings us to the second question, i.e., How to reconcile God's Omnipotence and Omniscience ? In answering this question Iqbal confuses two distinct issues, i.e. the issue concerning His knowledge and that concerning His power. He argues that if God is all powerful and creating, and if He also knows the particular events before-hand, then the universe is pre-determined and nothing novel can occur in it. So conceived, there will be no room for human freedom, and reward and punishment shall lose significance and meaning. To avoid this Iqbal holds that God knows potentialities only, that is, future possibilities before their actualization. He says, "the future is given to it not as lying before, yet to be traversed ; it is given only in the sense that it is present in its nature as an open possibility."[9] On this

7. Op. cit., p. 56.

8. Ibid.

9. Ibid., p. 49.

cular events before they occur and his mode of knowing is conceptual or essential. Iqbal is very careful to avoid this view as, he thinks with al-Ghazali, it entails a closed and finished universe with no room for originality and creativity in it.

Iqbal's position is based on a certain misconception about the meaning of 'knowledge', and on its confusion with pre-destination. Knowledge is the result of calculation on the basis of knowledge of prevalent conditions, and it does not predetermine the events foreseen. When a meteorologist makes a weather forecast on the basis of prevalent atmospheric conditions, he is not determining weather changes, he is only predicting them more or less surely.[10] Analogously, when God forestalls that a certain event will occur in the life of an individual in future, his forestalling the event in no way determines the occurrence of that event. There is no denying that God causes the occurrence of an event in the capacity of the Creator, and inasmuch as His creation is in the light of His knowledge : but His knowledge by itself does not cause the occurrence of events. God's knowledge and creativity are two disparate capacities and they should be treated as such. Even the Qur'an uses the phrase "aleemun hakeemun" for the two capacities of knowledge and Power of God. But Iqbal,

10. Ibn Sina takes the analogy of an astronomer to explain God's knowledge of particular events, though adding that the analogy is at the most helpful——M. M. Sharif, (ed.) op. cit., pp. 609-10.

required for freedom and originality is that God's creative activity should flow from the nature of God Himself and there are no external factors contributing towards its determination. Iqbal himself admits this when he says that the universe is a moment in the life of God, and again that the Nature is to God what character is to the human self. In so far as God is all-inclusive, and there is nothing alien to Him, His creation is free, despite His knowledge. Hence, the fact that God possesses knowledge of events before they occur does not do away with His creation and its originality so long as He creates from within His nature.

Let us now turn to Iqbal's discussion of the term 'taqdir' which will throw further light on his treatment of God's knowledge. "Destiny", according to Iqbal, "is time regarded as prior to the disclosure of its possibilities".[13] He is not ready to accept any interpretation of 'taqdir' which smacks of fatalism, again, to preserve originality in creation. However, all indeterminist interpretations are outdated and classical. In Arabic the word 'taqdir' is from the root 'Qdr' and means 'to calculate' or 'to measure' or 'to estimate'. There is no doubt that it has something common with the words 'qadir' and 'qudrat', which have the meaning of power. This, perhaps, led to the orthodox notion of 'taqdir', which Iqbal was very careful to reject. But if we understand the

13. M. Iqbal, op. cit., p. 49.

word 'taqdir' in its original sense, that is, in the sense of knowledge based on calculation and measurement, then it loses the obnoxious sense which the traditional usage carries about it. In this sense, the word 'taqdir' simply enunciates a very important scientific law, namely, that future events depend upon the present events. This may well be called 'Cosmical Determinism'. The destiny of a given individual, then, is dependent on, and determined by, his heredity and complex environmental conditions on this interpretation of 'taqdir', and it is a stark psychological fact which no one can gainsay. In this sense, modern psychology fervently believes in 'taqdir', which is neither fatalism of the theologians nor a mere amalgam of the realizable possibilities as believed by Iqbal. On this scientific interpretation, which I am proposing, if any one were fully conversant with hereditary and environmental forces relentlessly acting upon a man, he would be in a position to make, like God, the most accurate predictions about his future acts and ways of conduct. This is true of all happening and events of the universe. God's perfection lies in the fact that He has got such a complete and precise knowledge of the conditions obtaining in the universe that he has been proclaimed in the Qur'an as All-Knowing, All-Perfect and the Absolute. Thus, God's knowledge is not incompatible with His creativity and originality, as it was erroneously thought by Iqbal.

To sum up, then, God has the knowledge of particular events before they occur, and His Omnisci-

ence is based on His complete conversance with the over-all universal conditions : it is calculation or estimation, which enables God to forestall future events. In this sense, human and the Divine knowledge differ in degree more than in kind. Though we cannot understand the true nature of Divine knowledge, we can imperfectly understand it on the analogy of human knowledge.

—Dr. Mohammed Maruf

CHAPTER III

Iqbal's 'Psychology of Religion'

Very little work has been done on Iqbal's Psychology of Religion, and the present author has done a great job in supplying this gap in the Iqbal studies. This chapter should be read with the first two chapters of the book, as it offers criticism on some important points in them. (*Editor*)

The propensity towards a psychological study of religion is of a relatively recent origin and manifests itself prominently in American psychology. William James's *The Varieties of Religious Experience* appeared in 1902 and made him 'the Father of the Psychology of Religion'. It was till then the most exhaustive single contribution to the psychology of religion and set the pattern for most subsequent studies on the topic. Even today scholars make generous use both of the text and of the ideas available in this epoch-making work. Iqbal—a contemporary of James—was, of course, influenced by this trend.

In a short span of time, this discipline has made a phenomenal progress and attempts are in the offing to make it a truly scientific study. Psychology

of religion is supposed to be a further development of general psychology 'reaching in the direction of religious behaviour to comprehend its meaning'. In this perspective it looks within human experience to understand what religion means to persons and is different from philosophy of religion, which aims to view all religions impartially and evaluate each from a universal point of view. It is, then, more akin to history of religion and sociology of religion in so far as both, like a psychology of religion, 'gather, classify, and arrange facts in systematic order'. From these facts general principles are inferred. Hence, there is tendency to formulate a scientific definition of psychology of religion. This stress on the behavioural and the practical is amply evidenced in the urge to make it a branch of general psychology, "which attempts to understand, control, and predict human behaviour—both propriate and peripheral—which is perceived as being religious by the individual, and which is susceptible to one or more of the methods of psychological science".[1]

But, then, life is never a purely practical affair nor is it totally behavioural. Psychology itself is not yet an entirely objective appraisal of man's instinctual and emotional responses to external stimuli. What is more, as pointed by Iqbal too, man does not always live on the same level of consciousness. It is, as William James points out 'a stream of thought',

1. Orlo Strunk, Jr. *Religion : A Psychological Interpretation*, p. 20.

a conscious flow of changes with a felt continuity. But Iqbal does not agree with the view that ascribes to consciousness a fleeting element in experience. For Iqbal, its function is to enlighten the forward movement of life. "It is a case of tension, a state of self-concentration, by means of which life manages to shut out all memories and associations which have no bearing on a present action. It has no well-defined fringes : it shrinks and expands as the occasion demads. To describe it as an epi-phenomenon of the processes of matter is to deny it as an independent activity, and to deny it as an independent activity is to deny the validity of all knowledge which is only a systematized expression of consciousness. Thus consciousness is a variety of the purely spiritual principle of life which is not a substance, but an organising principle, a specific mode of behaviour essentially different from the behaviour of an externally worked machine."[2]

It is in this sense that Iqbal has criticised modern trends in psychology. Since an exclusively objective method of psychology cannot explain religious passion as a form of knowledge, it must "fail in the case of our newer psychologists as it did fail in the case of Locke and Hume".[3] It does not imply that Iqbal was against psychological analysis in the domain of religion. On the contrary, he approvingly mentions

2. Allama Muhammad Iqbal, *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, pp. 40-41.

3. Ibid., p. 26.

Prophet Muhammad's (Peace be upon him) observation of the psychic Jew and eulogises Ibn Khaldun for having, for the first time, appreciated the real import of the Prophet's attitude. He approached the content of religious consciousness in a more critical spirit and more or less anticipated the modern hypothesis of subliminal selves. For Iqbal, religious psychology means higher Sufism. He hopefully says that modern psychology has now begun to realize the importance of a careful study of the contents of mystic consciousness. It is not something mysterious, and he claims it to be as real and concrete as any other experience. To describe it as mystical, psychic or supernatural must not detract from its value as experience.

The main obsession in modern psychology of religion has all along been to limit religious experience within the so-called scientific boundaries of an objective study. But religious experience itself is not so simple as to legate itself to the status of normal scientific data. The peculiar characteristics of religious experience make it extremely difficult to confine it within the bounds of a laboratory discipline. It must, however, be admitted that it follows more or less the same course followed by our normal experience. There is the same awareness of stimuli and a search for meaning. The only difference here is that both the stimuli and the meaning assigned to it are religious in nature. As in normal experience, judgements of value and recognition are made, and ideals are visualised to be attained in the foreseeable

future. In fact, the nature of religious experience nowhere contradicts or violates the natural order of normal consciousness. 'Religious consciousness is not a world separate from secular consciousness'.

Iqbal has very appropriately stressed the experiential character of religious experience in his 'psychology of religion'. In this regard he gives secondary importance to science. He says : "Religion is not Physics or Chemistry seeking an explanation of nature in terms of causation ; it really aims at interpreting a totally different region of human experience —religious experience—the data of which cannot be reduced to the data of any other science. In fact, it must be said in justice to religion that it insisted on the necessity of concrete experience in religious life long before science learnt to do so. The conflict between the two is due not to the fact that the one is, and the other is not, based on concrete experience. Both seek concrete experience as a point of departure. Their conflict is due to the misapprehension that both interpret the same data of experience. We forget that religion aims at reaching the real significance of a special variety of human experience".[4]

But, how the data of the two disciplines differ ? Iqbal has divided religious life into three periods and has named them as 'Faith', 'Thought', and 'Discovery'. In the third period, he claims, metaphysics is displaced by psychology and religious life develops

4. Op. cit., pp. 25-26.

the ambition to come into direct contact with the ultimate reality. This is possible only in the case of what Iqbal designates as the higher Sufism, which is possible only in higher religion, and is the real subject of psychology of religion. While equating higher religion with a search for a higher life he asserts that it is essentially experience (though of a higher order), and recognises the necessity of experience as its basis. Higher religion, then, is a genuine endeavour to clarify human consciousness and is, as such, as critical of its own level of experience as science is of its own level.

What actually makes religious experience distinct from the normal human experience is the fact that it manifests itself as an unanalysable whole, that to its recipient it is a moment of intimate association with a unique other self, that it is incommunicable and, finally, that it is an immediate experience of the real 'transcending, encompassing, and momentarily surpassing the private personality of the subject of experience'. Now, since the quality of religious experience is to be directly intuited, it is obvious that it can be communicated in its wholeness. Moreover, people claiming to have religious experience seldom feel like describing it. Those who try to do so are often vague due to their use of a peculiar symbolism. Iqbal finds nothing amiss here, since the standpoint of the man who relies on religious experience for capturing reality must always remain individual and incommunicable. Moreover, there can be no ban on

looking for other avenues of experience than the normal one, if it fails to yield desired results. So, the moot point is, whether the normal level is the only level of knowledge-yielding experience. Iqbal finds historical support in the recorded evidence of religious divines. "The evidence of religious experts in all ages and countries is that there are potential types of consciousness lying close to our normal consciousness. If these types of consciousness open up possibility of life-giving and knowledge-yielding experience the question of the possibility of religion as a form of higher experience is a perfectly legitimate one and demands our serious attention".[5] The fact of there being more than one space-time orders induces Iqbal to question whether the causality-bound aspect of nature is the only acceptable mode of experience. Is not the Ultimate Reality invading our consciousness from some other directions as well ?

Iqbal considers religious experience as perfectly natural and normal. In this context he compares it with normal human feelings. He established the similarity by pointing out the common characteristics that the two possess as human activities. Like feeling, the meaning of its content can be transmitted to others in the form of propositions, but the content itself cannot be so transmitted. The incommunicability of religious experience itself is due to the fact that it is essentially a matter of inarticulate feeling,

5. Op. cit., p. 185.

untouched by discursive intellect. The only difference lies in the fact that religious experience (though essentially a state of feeling) is not the ordinary feeling of pleasure and pain which is organically based. It is, rather a unique kind of feeling requiring a special faculty to receive it.

For Iqbal, religious experience is not merely a subjective state of the individual. In his Lecture on "Knowledge and Religious Experience" he discusses the point at length :

> "Religious experience, I have tried to maintain, is essentially a state of feeling with a cognitive aspect, the content of which cannot be communicated to others, except in the form of a judgement. Now when a judgement which claims to be the interpretation of a certain region of human experience, not accessible to me, is placed before me for my assent, I am entitled to ask, what is the guarantee of its truth ? Are we in possession of a test which would reveal its validity ? If personal experience had been the only ground for the acceptance of a judgement of this kind, religion would have been the possession of few individuals only. Happily we are in possession of tests which do not differ from those applicable to other forms of knowledge. These I call the intellectual test and the pragmatic test. By the intellectual test I mean critical interpretation, without any presuppositions of human experience, generally with a view to discover whether our interpretation leads us ultimately to a reality of the same character as is revealed by religious experience. The pragmatic test judges it by its fruits. The former is applied the by philosopher, the latter by the

prophet."[6]

The fact that religious experience possesses a cognitive import carries much weight with Iqbal. What is, however, more important is its capacity to centralize the forces of the ego thereby endowing him with a new and a richer personality. For Iqbal, religious life is a step higher in life's struggle for evolution. From a fragile unity of the ego with ever present danger of dissolution, the religious life takes him to the domain of greater freedom in the realms of new and unknown situations. It fixes its gaze on experiences symbolic of those subtle movements of reality, which profoundly affects the destiny of the ego as a possible permanent element in the constitution of reality. It is in this sense that Iqbal expresses his dissatisfaction with the latter development of psychology and counsels it to look for an independent method and a new technique. Presently, for him, psychology has yet to touch even the outer fringe of religious life and is far from the richness and variety of religious experience.

What makes religious experience of vital importance to psychology is its claim to express and represent the whole man. William James has brought out this fact in his own laborious way :

> "If you have intuitions at all, they come from a deeper level of your nature than the loquacious level which rationalism inhabits. Your whole subconscious life, your impulses, your faith, your needs, your divinations,

6. Op cit., pp. 26-27.

> have prepared the premises, of which your consciousness now feels the weight of the result ; and something in you absolutely *knows* that the result must be truer than any logic-chopping rationalistic talk, however clever, that may contradict it''.[7]

It is true that in some sense religious experience integrates the disparate and competing propensities of the ego and develops a single synthetic transfiguration of his experiences. Indeed, religion is the expression of man's whole life. It is concerned, not with one aspect of life, but with whole of life or with life as a whole. The point can be made clear if religion is likened to an attitude. For an attitude involves the whole of the personality of a person—conscious, sub-conscious and unconscious :

> "Religion is the serious and social attitude of individuals or communities toward the power or powers which they conceive as having ultimate control over their interests and destinies....This definition has...one or two characteristics to which I wish to call the reader's attention. First, it defines religion as an 'attitude.'... The word 'attitude' shall here be used to cover that *responsive* side of consciousness which is found in such things as attention, interest, expectancy, feeling, tendencies to action etc. The advantages of defining religion as an attitude are sufficiently manifest. It shows that religion is not a matter of any one 'department' of psychic life but involves the whole man. It includes what there was of truth in the historical attempts to identify religion with feeling, belief or will. And it draws attention to the fact that religion is

7. William James, *Varieties of Religious Experience*, p.73.

> immediately subjective, thus differing from science (which emphasises 'content' rather than 'attitude'); and yet it points to the other fact also that religion involves and presupposes the acceptance of the objective. Religion is the attitude of a self towards an object in which the self genuinely believes".[8]

It is obvious from the above discussion that there are similarities between Iqbal and James in so far as they consider religion to be an expression of the whole personality of man. But, then there is also agreement between him and J. B. Pratt on this point, though Iqbal lays greater stress on the cognitive content of religious experience. Still, for him, religion is not a matter of any one 'department' of psychic life, but involves the whole man :

> "Religion is not a departmental affair; it is neither mere thought, nor mere feeling, nor mere action; it is an expression of the whole man".[9]

Iqbal goes a step further and makes it incumbent upon the recipient of religious experience to involve himself in a 'world-shaking' or a 'world-making' act, diffusing itself in the time-movement, and making itself effectively visible to the eye of history. Religious experience as the expression of a total ego, then, is expressed in a vital act which deepens the whole being of the ego, and sharpens his will with the creative assurance that the world is not something to be merely seen or known through concepts, but

8. J. Bissett Pratt, *The Religious Consciousness*, pp. 2-3.
9. Iqbal, op. cit., p. 2.

something to be made and remade by perpetual action and struggle.

It is this social aspect of religious experience which provides Iqbal the basis for his view that Prophetic experience is different from that of the mystic. "The mystic does not wish to return from the repose of 'unitary experience'; and even when he does return, as he must, his return does not mean much for mankind at large. The Prophet's return is creative. He returns to insert himself into the sweep of time with a view to control the forces of history, and thereby to create a fresh world of ideal. For the mystic the repose of 'unitary experience' is something final: for the Prophet it is the awakening, within him, of world-shaking psychological forces, calculated to completely transform the human world. Thus the desire to see his religious experience transformed into a living world-force is supreme in the Prophet. Thus his return amounts to a kind of pragmatic test of the value of his religious experience".[10] It is true that both the Prophet and the mystic come back to the normal levels of experience. However, the difference lies in the fact that 'the return of the Prophet is fraught with infinite meaning for mankind'.

It has been claimed by some scholars of Iqbal that 'although the mystic experience differs from the experience of a prophet, it does not differ from it qualitatively. That is, the two forms of religious

10. Op. cit., p. 124.

consciousness differ not in kind, but in degree only'. Indeed, Iqbal has defined a prophet as "a type of mystic consciousness in which 'unitary experience' tends to overflow its boundaries and seek opportunities of redirecting or refashioning the forces of collective life. In his personality the finite centre of life sinks into his own infinite depths only to spring up again, with fresh vigour, to destroy the old, and to disclose the new directions of life".[11] No doubt, the above definition clearly indicates the fact that a prophet is a type of mystic consciousness. But this consciousness is different both 'in degree and kind'. And Iqbal is not at all vague on this point :

> "The nature of Prophet's religious experience, as disclosed in the Qur'an, however, is wholly different. It is not mere experience in the sense of a purely biological event, happening inside the experiment and necessitating no reactions on his social environment. It is individual experience creative of a social order".[12]

He goes further and argues :

> "The poi: t to be seized is that while it is psychologically possible for a saint to attain to a prophetic experience his experience will have no socio-political significance making him the centre of a new organization and entitling him to declare this organization to be the

11. Op. cit., p. 125.

12. Syed Abdul Vahid, (ed.), *Thoughts and Reflections of Iqbal*, pp. 166-167. (Presidential Address delivered at the Annual Session of the All-India Muslim League at Allahabad on the 29th December, 1930).

criterion of the faith or disbelief of the followers of Muhammad".[13]

What does this prove ? (1) that quantitatively the mystic experience is limited ; (2) that qualitatively, it does not have that inbuilt force which cannot but create a new socio-political order. In so far as mystic experience is a 'consciousness' similar to that of prophetic consciousness, Iqbal does not restrict it to man alone :

> "Indeed the way in which the word 'Wahy' (inspiration) is used in the Quran shows that the Quran regards it as a universal property of life ; though its nature and character are different at different stages of the evolution of life. The plant growing freely in space, the animal developing a new organ to suit a new environment, and a human being receiving light from the inner depths of life, are all cases of inspiration varying in character according to the needs of the recipient, or the needs of the species to which the recipient belongs".[14]

Despite these differences, a comprehensive study of mystic consciousness still remains the only possible way to an understanding of religious experience. More so, since in the realm of psychology, "all states, whether their content is religious or non-religious, are organically determined".[15] It is true that we are yet not in possession of a really effective scientific method to analyse and evaluate the contents

13. Op. cit., pp. 268-269. (Reply to questions raised by Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru).
14. *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, p. 125.
15. Ibid., p. 23.

of non-rational and other than intellectual modes of consciousness. Still, there is no justification for an escape from the fact of there being types of experience other than purely sensory. It is no use dubbing religious experience as illusion. "The view that such experiences are neurotic or mystical will not finally settle the question of their meaning or value. If an outlook beyond physics is possible, we must courageously face the possibility, even though it may disturb or tend to modify our normal ways of life and thought".[16]

—Asif Iqbal Khan

16. Op. cit., pp. 189-190.

CHAPTER IV

Iqbal's Concept[1] of Personal Identity

The problem of personal identity is one of the chief philosophical problems today. The question whether identity is physical or mental is a crucial question, and different thinkers have answered it differently. The author has very incisively gone into the question and what has resulted is a keen and beautiful analysis of the question itself. I may add that the author has always shown a keen interest in the problem of identity, on which his main research figures, and in the present article he has epitomized his findings with reference to Iqbal.

(*Editor*)

The problem of personal identity arises in a dualistic context. The literature on this issue begins most effectively with Plato. He says, "I cannot persuade Crito, my friends that the Socrates, who is now concerning and arranging the details of his argument is really I : he thinks I am the one, whom he will presently see as a corpse, and he asks, how to bury me. And though I have been saying at great length that after I drink the poison, I shall no longer be with you, but shall go among the joys of the blessed.

1. Phaedo, *The Dialogues of Plato,* translated by Jowett, p. 499.

...he seems to think that was Idle talk uttered to encourage you and myself".[2] In this passage, it is clear that person essentially is the mind or the soul, and not the body. In other words, I am my soul or mind.

It may, however, be pointed out that person words are not the words for some incorporeal objects. Persons are, what we meet in our everyday life. It is wrong to suggest that we encounter the containers only in which other people are kept or that they meet the fleshy horses, which we ourselves occupy. So it is strange to say that the word "Person" is equivalent to the word "Soul" or "Mind". The person words are meaningful, but what do they mean is to be decided in order to establish the criterion of personal identity.

The Philosophical behaviourists are of the opinion that to say that "Something has mind" is just to say that "it is a material thing behaving or disposed to behave in a particular way." It is perfectly proper to say in one logical tone of voice that there exist minds, and to say in another logical tone of voice that there exist bodies. But these expressions do not indicate two different species of existence, for existence is not a generic word like coloured or sexed.

But an inquiry into what a person essentially is begins, when we wonder about the way the statements about "I" are made and comprehended. If, for

2. G. Ryle, *The Concept of Mind* (London 1949), p. 23.

example, X remarks "I am thinking of this paper," the this "I" must designate something, for thinking in void is an impossibility. This "I" is said to stand for the "Self", and the problem of personal Identity is regarded as the problem of the self. There is, however, a lot of controversy about the nature of self. Some philosophers are of the view that it is nothing, but a series of a persons inner mental states in toto, and others take it for a spiritual substance to which these states belong. This use of the word "Self" has confined the question to the Unity of the mind, and the body stands eliminated altogether.

Locke, however, does not deny the importance of body. He says that the criterion for the identity of a person is distinct from that of a man. A man, according to him, is a certain sort of living organism, whose identity depends upon its biological organization. He, on the other hand, defines a person as "a thinking intelligent being, that has reason and reflection, and can consider itself as itself, the same thinking thing, in different times and places ; which it does only by that consciousness, which is inseparable from thinking and ... essential to it : It being impossible for any one to perceive without perceiving that he does perceive. When we see, hear, smell, taste, feel, meditate or will anything, we know that we do so. Thus it is always as to our present sensations and perceptions, and by this every one is

to himself that which he calls self."[3] He further remarks for since consciousness always accompanies thinking, and it is that which makes everyone to be what he calls self, and thereby distinguishes himself from all other thinking things, in this alone consists personal identity i.e., the Samenen of a rational being: and as far as this consciousness can be extended backwards to any past action or thought, so far reaches the identity of the person ; it is the same self now it was then ; and it is by the same self with this present one that now reflects on it, that that action was done".[4] So the criterion for the identiyt of a person is the self i.e., consciousness, a concept intended to embrace both awareness and memory. He has pointed out an important fact, which other philosophers have ignored. The concept of identity has to be connected with some substantive notion in order to have any use at all. Why a given entity is called the same depends upon the nature of that identity. This implies an answer to the unity problem i.e., an entity of any kind can remain the same throughout its changes provided that the changes, that take place in it, are characteristic of entities of that sort, and are allowed for in their concept.

Hume says that no definite meaning can be attached to the word self. He is of the opinion that there

3. Locke, *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, Book II, Chapter Section.

4. Ibid.

is no permanent, identical and unchanging substance, which can be regarded the seat of the fleeting perceptions. If it is said that substance is required for personal identity to remain the same while perceptions come and go, then he will reply that, in spite of his best efforts, he failed to find any empirical evidence for such a thing. "On my part, when I enter most intimately into what I call myself, I always stumble on some particular perception or other, of heat or cold, light or shade, love or hatred, pain or pleasure. I never catch myself at any time without a perception, and I never can observe anything but perceptions".[5]

But, according to Iqbal a person, as Hume holds, is not just "a bundle a collection of different perceptions" but rather an all-embracing concrete self—the ultimate sense of all individual life and thought. The angel of death can touch the corporeal i.e., the body, but keeps away from the self[6] i.e., the mind or consciousness. The only reality in the world is the self or mind. It is the centre of all experience. It is not merely a "thought" of Hegel, or "experience" of Bradley, rather the entire personality. It is not space-bound in the same in which body is. It is essentially private and unique, and the pure duration belongs to it alone. Iqbal says, "to exist in pure duration is to be a self, and to be a self is to

5. Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature*, (Selby-Bigge : Oxford), p. 252.
6. Iqbal, *Derb-i-Kalim*, p. 63.

be able to say 'I am'".[7] He further believes that it is always in a state of tension to receive and interpret fresh stimuli, and to take appropriate action on its own initiative. It is this state of tension, according to Iqbal, which makes the self immortal. "Personality is a state of tension, and can continue only, if that state is maintained. If the state of tension is not maintained, relaxation will ensue. Since personality or the state of tension is the most valuable achievement of man, he should see that he does not revert to a state of relaxation. That which tends to maintain the state of tension tends to make us immortal."[8] So, according to Iqbal, the self which is the criterion of personal identity has to maintain constant state of tension in order to attain immortality. He tells us, "It is in the ego's effort to be something that he discovers his final opportunity to sharpen his objectivity, and acquire a more fundamental 'I am...'."[9]

It may, however, be pointed out that "I" in "I am" is just a grammatical convenience, and signifies nothing. To conclude, for example, from "I am thinking" to "something is thinking" is wrong. The statement "I am thinking" is similar to the statement "It is lightening". As we cannot proceed from "It is lightening" to "something is lightening", similarly

7. Iqbal, *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, p. 56,
8. *Introduction to the Secret of Self*, p. XVI.
9. Iqbal, ibid., p. 198.

we cannot pass on from "I am thinking" to "something thinking". This is why Russell suggests that, instead of saying "I think", we should say "It thinks". He is of the view that it is the grammatical structure of the statement "I think", which creates problems. It is, therefore, in the fitness of things to say that "It thinks in me", as we say "It rains here".[10]

If "I" just performs the function of "It", then Iqbal's concept of "Self" becomes meaningless. But a correspondence between the first-person and third-person statements solves the problem. As the third-person statements are always about something i.e., person, so must be the first-person statements. For example, X says "Y is thinking", this shall be true in case Y also says "I am thinking." If Y says "I am thinking" and X says "Y is thinking", then they both are exactly saying the same thing. Now as "Y is thinking" refers to something i.e., Y, similarly "I" in "I am thinking" must refer to something i.e., Y, because the statement "I am thinking" made by Y reports the same fact, which is reported about him. Thus "I" in "I am" stands for something i.e. the person.

But there is a difference between the statements about a person and the statements about oneself. The former makes a reference to his body, otherwise individuation is not possible. The latter requires no such reference. For instance, if I say "I

10. B. Russell, *The Analysis of Mind* (London, 1921), p. 18.

have toothache", I need not first look at my body, and then make the statement. The veracity of this statement is independent of the knowledge of my body.

It may be objected that in some of the first-person statements "I" definitely stands for body e.g., X weighs one hundred pounds, hence accordingly X is this body. But, here a distinction between the physical and psychological nature of such statements to be kept in mind. The former refer not to a person, rather what belongs to him contingently. They just ascribe colour, height, weight etc. The statements of psychological nature, on the other hand, are not about what belongs to a person, rather about what he essentially is, for they can be known and understood without any knowledge of the body whatsoever. But Ryle may say that mind as such has no existence apart from the body, because the so-called mental experiences can be analysed into the modes of behaviourism of a person when, we ascribe some mental attributes to a person, we just ascribe a bit of behaviour to him. He remarks, "...when we characterise people by mental predicates, we are not making untestable inferences to any ghostly processes occurring in a stream of consciousness, which we are deterred from visiting; describing the ways in which these people conduct parts of their predominantly public behaviour".[11]

11. G. Ryle, *The Concept of Mind* (London, 1949), p. 51.

Ryle's observation is correct that mental concepts are nothing, but what people do or are prone to do. But there are certain mental concepts, such as experiences, mental imagery and consciousness, where some kind of inner process story cannot be avoided. The predicates, which refer to thought, feeling, sensation can neither be analysed into behaviouristic pieces nor in dispositional behaviour. They signify something secret and private ; for example, how shall we give a behaviouristic interpretation of the statement "I anticipate an Israel attack on Egypt" or "I sat on the steering, and it occurred to me that my car may not meet an accident". Ryle himself makes a distinction between those mental concepts, which refer to bodily sensations, and therefore analysable behaviouristically, and those which have no physical reference, so that if not all, at least some truths about oneself can be understood without any reference to body. Thus, Iqbal is right in holding that if "I" in the first person statement of psychological nature stands for a person, then it necessarily stands for something nonphysical i.e., self or mind, and it is this self or mind, which is the criterion of personal identity.

—*Professor Shahid Hussain*

CHAPTER V

Iqbal's View of Evolution

Since the times when Charles Darwin wrote his famous "The Origin of Species", the problem of Evolution has come into the forefront. Later the question was crystallized into two opposing views: (*i*) mechanistic and (*ii*) finalistic. Henry Bergson rejected both of these views. Iqbal, agreeing with him in the main, propounded a progressive and emergent view of evolution. The author has acutely presented this aspect of evolution with a marked directness seldom found in writings on the subject. (*Editor*)

Darwin proved nothing against God or religion explicitly in his theory of evolution. But in spite of this the established theological principles were badly shaken. The divine Theory of creation received a severe jolt for a pretty long time, the premises and conclusions of Darwinian Theory remained indubitable, and religious faith seemed to have lost its very foundation.

The antithesis, however, started appearing, and the explanation of organic and social phenomena by external cause, as advocated by Darwin, was contended. The views of Lamarck, Morgan and Berg-

son turned the tide in favour of the theological concept of the universe.

Iqbal, unlike Darwin holds that God is both the internal Reality and external appearance, the beginning as well as the end, "The first and the last, the visible and the invisible".[1] He has, therefore, combined transcendence and immanence to prepare a base for a new scientific religion. He believes, not only in a personal and transcendent God, rather for him He is an internal certainty too. His concept of evolution represents both the Quranic teachings and the latest trends in evolution. But at the same time it is remarkably original and purely his own.

He is of the opinion that the multiplicity of phenomena is the manifestation of a break up of the unity into its parts. The entire life activity is, therefore, directed towards the reattainment of its original unity, which is the fountain-head of being and its power. He says that the subject and object, cause and effect, are only projections of a being, which sometimes appears as the one, and sometimes as the other, in order to accomplish its goals. These different aspects of the primary being are as sparks into which the flame divides itself. It is a division of a unity, which has produced the human reason, and completely confined its activities to the understanding of its components.[2] He is, perhaps, referring here to the

1. *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, p. 107.
2. *Asrar-o-Rumuz* (*Asrar-i-Khudi*), pp. 13-14.

analytical power of human reason, which divides things, ideas and objects into their parts, before comprehending its import. But, in case the import of a thing lies not in its parts, rather in its configuration. The intellect cannot attain the complete view of reality. This is why he disparages reason and apotheosises reason. It is through intuition that the unity of things is approachable.

What Iqbal is implicitly suggesting is that the pushing force of evolution is the conative tendency of things i.e., their effort to attain their primal unity. He is of the opinion that the phenomenal process is the self-realization of a primal oneness broken up into its parts. It is conation and not cognition, which he emphasises. Iqbal, unlike Hegel rejects the claims of intellect or idea to represent the reality of life to be its only creative power. He feels that intellect alone is not enough, and in order to bring positive results, it must seek the help and inspiration of intuition.[3]

Life, according to him, creates its own oppositions and contradictions for revealing its possibilities. The reality of the external world, according to him, is derivative and not independent. Indeed the evolution of life shows that, though in the beginning the mental is dominated by the physical, the mental as it grows in power tends to dominate the physical, and may eventually rise to a position of complete independ-

3. *Darb-i-Kalim*, pp. 10-11.

ence. Nor is there such a thing as a purely physical level in the sense of possessing materiality, elementarily incapable of evolving the creative synthesis ; we call life and mind, and needing a transcendental deity to impregnate it with the sentient and the mental.[4] The creative role played by contradictions and oppositions is stressed by Iqbal again and again. He says that mental power and physical strength can only develop through a tough resistance against the forces of opposition.[5]

Iqbal, therefore, does not regard this universe to be a finished product, stagnant and incapable of change. He remarks, "To my mind, there is nothing more alien to the Quranic world than the idea that the universe is a temporal working-out of a preconceived plan...an already completed product, which left the hands of its maker ages ago and is now lying stretched in space as added mass of matter, to which time does nothing, and consequently is nothing[6] ; for him, it is an evolving and changing world, because deep in its being lies, perhaps, the dream of a new birth.

If he is not satisfied with the imperfect world surrounding him, then, what role man is to play to turn this imperfection into perfection. Iqbal, like Bergson, does not believe in mechanism and finalism. He is against mechanistic determinism, for it snatches

4. *The Reconstruction of Religous Thought in Islam*, p. 116.
5. *Asrar-o-Rumuz* (*Asrar-i-Khudi*), p. 59.
6. *The Reconstruction*, p. 55.

freedom from man and stresses rigid causation. "In fact all creative activity is free activity. Creation is opposed to repetition, which is a characteristic of mechanical action. That is why, it is impossible to explain the creative activity of life in terms of mechanism."[7] As far as finalism is concerned, he remarks, "The world regarded as a process realizing a pre-ordained goal is not a world of free, responsible moral agents ; it is only a stage on which puppets are made to move by a kind of pull from behind.[8] Thus, he abhors the very idea of predestination, which has been dominating the occidental mind for a pretty long period, and which totally paralysed their conative power. For him, there are no fixed ends, rather "There is a progressive formation of fresh ends, purposes, and ideal scales of values as the process of life grows and expands. His concept of destiny is, therefore, very different. It is not a power working from without, rather an internal reach of a thing, its realizable possibilities present in its nature that actualize themselves serially without any compulsive feeling. The future of every human being, according to Iqbal, is an open possibility and not a fixed order of events with definite outlines. "Every act of a free ego creates a new situation and thus offers further opportunities of creative unfolding".[9] "Every moment in the life of Reality is original, giving birth to what is absolutely novel and unforeseeable. . .that

7. Op. cit., p. 50.
8. Ibid., p. 54.
9. Ibid., p. 123.

is why, it is impossible to explain the creative activity of life in terms of mechanism. . . Life with its intense feeling of spontaneity constitutes a centre of indeterminism, and thus falls outside the domain of necessity.[10] Thus, for Iqbal life is in a flux. It is a continuous process of the formation of new ends and purposes. We are in a new state every moment. We exist, we change, we mature and we create perpetually. "We become by creating to be what we are. Life is a passage through a series of deaths".[11]

Iqbal is of the opinion that in man evolution does not come to end. He has unlimited potentialities to improve and develop, both psychologically and biologically. He can be a true and authentic individual, existentially speaking, through a constant struggle and effort. Iqbal is all praise for Nietzsche, because the latter is not satisfied with man as he is, and gives the idea of superman, i.e., a man superior, both mentally and physically.

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10. Op. cit., p. 50. 11. Ibid., p. 54.

CHAPTER VI

Iqbal's Conception of Time and Space

Allama Iqbal had a special interest in the concepts of Space and Time, with particular reference to Muslim thouget. In 1934, he was offered to write on "Space and Time in the History of Muslim Thought" for the Rhodes Scholarship. It is among the basic concepts discussed by Iqbal both in his poetry and in prose. The author has taken pains to present it as faithfully as within his means as a young student of Iqbal.

(*Editor*).

The problem of space and time has drawn the attention of philosophers throughout the history of thought. The men of learning have always found this problem challenging enough, and each one of them has tried in his own way to find out a solution of this perplexing problem. However, space and time seem directly self-revealing realities, and to the ordinary man the necessity of having theories about them is difficult to appreciate. Nevertheless, there are indeed puzzling psychological and philosophical questions concerning them, but these all seem, when we reflect on them, to concern wholly and solely our knowledge, and the mistakes and illusions which may

arise in regard to our knowledge. This fact makes it all the more necessary that theories about space and time be formulated, as the primary function of philosophy is the critical appreciation and clarification of the concepts provided by the physical science.

Every philosopher starts his reflections on various philosophical problems from the stand-point of his world-view. The world-view is an imaginative background of his thoughts, his reflections borrow their shape and draw their content from it, revolve round it and always return to reform it. In the case of Iqbal, the imaginative background of his thoughts is largely coloured by the spirit of the Quranic teachings. Iqbal was deeply impressed by the empirical spirit of the Quran, which was revealed in an age which renounced the visible as of no value in man's search after God. Amongst various philosophical problems discussed by Iqbal in his celebrated "lectures" as well as poetry, he also gives considerable attention to the problem of space and time. This seems to be due partly to the fact that according to the Quran, the alternation of day and night is one of the greatest signs of God, and partly to the Prophets ; identification of God with "Dahr" (time) in a well-known tradition. Indeed, some of the greatest Muslim sufis believed in the mystic properties of the word "Dahr". According to Muhyuddin Ibn-ul-Arabi "Dahr" is one of the beautiful names of God, and Razi tells us in his commentary on the Quran that

some of the Muslim saints had taught him to repeat the word "Dahr".[1]

Iqbal fully agrees with Kant that time and space are not objective. There is no self-existing void in which things are situated, nor self-existing time, given as a line on which we move. Space and time are for him, as they are for Kant, purely subjective ; they are the forms of perception which the mind possesses as pure a priori cognitions. But from the subjectivity of space and time Kant concluded that all our knowledge is only of phenomena, i.e. of things as they appear to us. Iqbal, however, parts company with Kant with regard to the possibility of the knowledge of noumena, i.e., of the things-in-themselves, or as they actually are. Kant's view of the thing-in-itself and the thing as it appears to us, very much determined the character of his question regarding the possibility of metaphysics.[2] Kant is right so far as the normal level of experience is concerned. But the question is that whether the normal level is the only level of knowledge-yielding experience. Iqbal maintains that it is not the only level. For the import of time and space varies according to the varying grades of beings. Time and space are not fixed and unvarying modes, as Kant would have them, into which all our knowledge is moulded and determined.[3] These are interpretations which thought

1. Mohd Iqbal, *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, p. 73.

2. Ibid., p. 172.

3. Dr. Ishrat Hasan, *Metaphysics of Iqbal*, p. 12.

puts on the creative activity of God. These are not independent realities existing per se, but only intellectual modes which themselves admit of new meanings in relation to beings higher and lower than ourselves, and consequently, there may be a grade of experience in which there is neither space nor time.[4] Here it would not be improper to quote a stanza from Rumi, who says :

بر مکان و بر زمان اسوار شو
فارغ از پیچاک این زنار شو
چشم بکشا بر زمان و بر مکان
این دو یک حال است از احوال جان

No philosopher throughout the history of philosophy can claim absolute originality with regard to his view ; and, so, neither does Iqbal. Sometimes Iqbal directly states his views about some problem, but at times when this is not possible, he starts criticising the views held by others about the same problem, and in the process formulating his own views ; for his negative is always a preface to the positive. Iqbal starts with the refutation of Zeno's paradoxes. Is space an independent void in which things are situated and which would remain intact if all things were withdrawn ? Zeno approached the problem of space through the question of movement in space.[5] Zeno took space to be infinitely divisible, and, on this account argued that movement in space is impossible. Before the moving body can reach the

4. Op. cit., p. 13. 5. Iqbal, Op. cit., p. 35.

point of its destination, it must pass through half the space intervening between the point of start and the point of destination ; and before it can pass through that half, it must travel through half of the half, and so on to infinity. We cannot move from one point of space to another without passing through an infinite number of points in the intervening space. But it is impossible to pass through an infinity of points in a finite time. Hence the flying arrow does not move ; because at any moment during the course of its flight it is at rest at some point in space. Thus, Zeno held that movement was only a deceptive appearance, and that Reality was one and immutable. The unreality of movement means the unreality of an independent space.[6]

The Asharites did not believe in the infinite divisibility of space and time. With them space and time consist of points and instants which cannot be further sub-divided. Thus they proved the possibility of motion on the supposition that infinitesimals do exist ; for if the divisibility of space is limited, then movement from one point to another point in space is possible in a finite time. But this notion of infinitesimals was rejected by Ibn-i-Hazm and modern mathematics. However, modern thinkers, including Bergson and Russell, try to refute Zeno's position from different angles. To Bergson, movement is the fundamental reality, and the paradox of Zeno is due

6. Op. cit., p. 35.

to a wrong apprehension of space and time which are regarded by Bergson only as intellectual views of movement.[7] Russell bases his argument on Cantor's theory of mathematical continuity according to which space and time are continuous. Between any two points in space there is an infinite number of points, and in an infinite series no two points are next to one another. There are no infinitesimals which make the movement impossible. It is right that the arrow is at rest at every moment of its flight. But it does not mean that the arrow does not move. There is always a one-one correspondence between the infinite series of positions and infinite series of instants. When the arrow is said to be moving we mean that we observe it at a number of positions at a number of instants. At one instant it is observed at one point; at a neighbouring instant it is observed at the neighbouring point and so on. To any given instant of time corresponds a position of the body, and to any given position of body corresponds an instant of time. This correspondence between the sequence of instants and the sequence of points is called movement.[8]

According to Iqbal, the one-one correspondence between an infinite multiplicity of instants in a finite interval of time, and an infinite multiplicity of points, in a finite portion of space, does not solve the diffi-

7. Ibid., p. 36.

8. Dr. Jamila Khatoon, *The Place of God, Man and Universe in the Philosophic System of Iqbal*, p. 97.

culty arising from divisibility. This conception of continuity does not apply to the movement as an act, but to the picture of the movement as viewed from outside. The flight of the arrow as a passage in space is divisible, but its flight regarded as an act, apart from its realisation in space, is one and incapable of partition into multiplicity. In partition lies its destruction.[9]

Neither our images nor concept of space and time are identical with anything spatial which we perceive. It is from this incongruence of percepts and concepts of space and time that the psychological problems in regard to them arise. Iqbal agrees with Bergson that whole difficulty arises due to the lack of the psychological approach. The Asharites as well as the moderners look at the problem from a purely objective point of view which cannot carry us far.[10] Time, according to Asharites, is a succession of individual "nows"; from which it obviously follows that between every two individual "nows" or moments of time, there is an unoccupied movement of time, that is to say, a void of time. The absurdity of this conclusion is due to the fact that they took no lesson from the history of Greek thought, which had adopted the same point of view and had reached no results.[11] Newton, in our own time, describes time as something which in itself, and from its own

9. Iqbal, op. cit., p. 37.

10. *The Place of God, Man and Universe in the Philosophic System of Iqbal*, p. 97.

11. Iqbal, op. cit., p. 73.

nature, flows equally. But if flow or passage is the last word as to the nature of time, there must be another time to time the movement of the first time, and another time which times the second time, and so on to infinity. Thus the notion of time as something wholly objective is beset with difficulties. It must, however, be admitted that the practical Arab mind could not regard time as something unreal like the Greeks. However, later Muslim theologians fully realised these difficulties. Mulla Jalal-ud-Din Dawani tells us that if we take time to be a kind of span which makes possible the appearance of events as a moving procession and conceive this span to be a unity, then we cannot but describe it as an original state of Divine activity, encompassing all the succeeding states of that activity. But Mulla Dawani takes good care to add that a deeper insight into the nature of succession reveals its relativity, so that it disappears in the case of God to whom all events are present in a single act of perception.[12]

The sufi poet Iraqi conceives of infinite varieties of time, relative to the various grades of being, intervening between materiality and pure spirituality. The time of gross bodies, which arises from the revolution of the heaven is divisible into past, present and future. The time of immaterial beings is also serial in character. Rising higher and higher in the scale of immaterial being, we reach

12. Op. cit., pp. 74-75.

Divine Time—time which is absolutely free from the quality of passage, and consequently does not admit of divisibility, sequence and change. It is above eternity and has neither beginning nor end. God sees all in one indivisible act of perception. The priority of God is not due to the priority of time ; on the other hand, the priority of time is due to God's priority. Thus Divine Time is what Quran describes as the "Mother of Books" in which the whole of history, freed from the net of causal sequence, is gathered up in a super-eternal "now".[13] From the above discussion Iqbal reaches the conclusion that purely objective point of view is only partially helpful in understanding the nature of time. Hence, the right course is a careful psychological analysis of our conscious experience which alone reveals the true nature of time. In this regard, Iqbal draws distinction between the two aspects of the self, appreciative and efficient. The appreciative self lives in pure duration, i.e., change without succession. The life of the self consists in its movement from appreciation to efficiency, from intuition to intellect, and atomic time, which is serial in character, is born out of this movement. Thus the nature of our conscious experience reconciles in itself the opposition of permanence and change, of time regarded as change without succession and time regarded as atomic.

It was not Iqbal the philosopher, who became

13. Op. cit., pp. 75-76.

conscious of the importance of time. On the contrary, it was the poet that forced the philosopher look for the immediate fact of experience. Iqbal as a young poet had a vision of the devastating aspect of time. This vision was later broadened, and the poet saw in time not only an agent of destruction but also a principal factor for the creation of novelty and uniqueness. In *Khizr-i-Rah*, the last poem of *Bang-i-Dara*, the concept of time as a ceaseless duration emerges. Life is not measurable in serial time, it is ever-flowing, eternal and evergreen. *Asrar-i-Khudi* represents Iqbal's formative period as a philosopher, and in this poem the reference to time is not direct ; it is implied in his philosophy of activity. In *Payam-i-Mashriq*, his concept of time as the ultimate principle is given the best poetic expression. It is in his poem *Nawa-i-Waqt* that time is presented as the "clothing of man and the garment of God and destiny as mere spell of time." This poem describes the devastating as well as the creative aspect of time.[14] In *Javid-Namah* Iqbal makes a clear distinction between space, time and duration. For him it is duration which is real, time and space being derivations from this duration. He regards space and time as modes of life. It is only when vision is deflected from the immediately present reality, that the succession of today and tomorrow is produced.[15] In *Masjid-i-Qirtabah* in the collection *Bal-i-Jabril*,

14. Hafeez Malik, *Iqbal : The Poet-Philosopher of Pakistan*, pp. 250-51.
15. Ibid., p. 252.

time is linked with history, and the history is presented as a continuous process of the achievements of the dynamic individuals, the heroes of history, who by their constant endeavour and ceaseless activity realise values and are able to transcend the transience of the successive time. In this poem, time appears to be a continuous series of happenings, a process of becoming, a pure duration without succession of day and night.[16]

Divine life is in touch with the whole universe on the analogy of the souls' contact with the body. The soul is neither inside nor outside the body ; yet its contact with every atom of the body is real. But it is impossible to conceive this contact except by positing some kind of space which befits the subtleness of the soul. Therefore, the existence of space in relation to the life of God cannot be denied ; only we should carefully define the kind of space which may be predicated of the Absolutess of God.[17] For Iraqi, there are three kinds of space—the space of material bodies, the space of immaterial beings, and the space of God. The space of material bodies is further divided into three kinds. Firstly, the space of gross bodies of which we predicate roominess. In this space movement takes time and bodies occupy their respective place and resist displacement. Secondly, the space of subtle bodies, e.g., air and sound. In this space, too, bodies resist each other and, their

16. Op. cit.

17. *Reconstruction*, p. 135.

movement is measurable in time, however this time is different from the time of gross bodies. Thirdly, we have the space of light. The light of a candle spreads in all directions in a room without displacing the air in the room ; and this shows that the space of light is more subtle than the space of air.[18] Now coming to the space of immaterial beings, e.g., angels, it should be marked that element of distance is not entirely absent from their space ; for immaterial beings, while they can easily pass through the stone walls, cannot altogether dispense with motion. The human soul is, however, spatially free. It is neither at rest nor in motion. Lastly, the space of God is free from all dimensions, and is the meeting point of all the infinities.[19] According to Iqbal, Iraqi is really trying to reach the concept of space as a dynamic appearance. His mind was vaguely struggling with the concept of space as an infinite continuum : yet he was unable to see the full implications of his thought, partly because he was not a mathematician, and partly because of his natural prejudice in favour of the traditional Aristotelian idea of a fixed universe. Iraqi's mind, no doubt, moved in the right direction ; but his Aristotelian prejudices plus lack of a psychological analysis blocked his progress. With his view that Divine Time is utterly devoid of change —a view obviously based on an inadequate analysis of the conscious experience—it was not possible for

18. Op. cit., p. 136.

19. Ibid.

him to discover the relation between Divine Time and serial time, and to reach, through this discovery, the essentially Islamic idea of continuous creation, which means a growing universe.[20]

Iqbal is a great admirer of Einstein, who with his theory of relativity, totally revolutionised the nineteenth-century scientific views about space and time. The theory of relativity by merging time into "space-time" damaged the traditional notion of matter more than all the arguments of the philosophers. Matter has become, instead of something which persists in time and moves in space, a system of inter-related events. With Einstein space is real, but relative to the observer. He rejects the concepts of absolute time and absolute space. The object observed is variable and is relative to the observer; its mass, shape and size change as the observer's position and speed change. Movement and rest, too, are relative to the observer. There is, hence, no such thing as a self-subsisting materialism of classical physics. It is true that according to the theory of relativity the shapes, sizes and durations of phenomena are not absolute. But the space-time frame does not depend on the observer's mind, it depends on the point of the material universe to which his body is attached. For Iqbal, the philosophical value of the theory is twofold. Firstly, it destroys, not the objectivity of nature, but the view

20. Op. cit., pp. 137-38.

of the substance as simple location in space...a view which led to materialism in classical physics. Secondly, the theory makes space dependent on matter. The universe, according to Einstein, is not a kind of island in an infinite space ; it is finite but boundless ; beyond it there is no empty space. In the absence of matter the universe would shrink to a point. However, Einstein's theory of relativity presents one great difficulty, i.e., the unreality of time. A theory which takes time to be a kind of fourth dimension of space must regard the future as something already given, as fixed as the past. Time as a free creative movement has no meaning for the theory. This theory also neglects certain characteristics of the time as experienced by us. It is not possible to say that the nature of time is exhausted by the characteristics, which the theory does note and which only can be mathematically treated. Nor is it possible for us laymen to understand what is the real nature of Einstein's time. A modern Russian writer, Ouspensky, in his book *Tertium Organum* conceives the fourth dimension of space to be the movement of a three-dimensional figure in a direction not contained in itself. And since time is the distance separating events in order of succession and binding them in different wholes, it is obviously a distance lying in a direction not contained in the three-dimensional space. As a new dimension this distance, separating events in order of succession, is incommensurable with the dimension of three-dimensional space,

as a year is incommensurable with St. Petersburg. Ouspensky also described our time sense as a misty space-sense and argues, on the basis of our psychic constitution, that to one, two or three-dimensional beings the higher dimension must always appear as succession in time. In other words, time is not a creative movement; and what we call as future events are not fresh happenings but things already given and located in an unknown space.[21]

Iqbal disagrees with Einstein and Ouspensky, who reduce time to a fourth dimension of space. For him time is more fundamental than space; it is related to space as soul is to body. It is the mind of space. Iqbal views time as pure duration unadulterated by space. It is, however, impossible to express the inner experience of pure duration in words, for language is shaped on the serial time of our daily efficient self. Iqbal cites an example to clarify this point. According to the physical science the cause of our sensation of red colour is the rapidity of wave motion the frequency of which is 400 billions per second. If one could observe this tremendous frequency from the outside, and count it at the rate of 2,000 per second, which is the limit of the perceptibility of light, it will take more than 6,000 years to finish the enumeration. Yet in the single momentary mental act of perception one holds together a frequency of wave motion which is practically in-

21. Op. cit., pp. 39-40.

calculable. That is how the mental act transforms succession into duration. The appreciative self acts as corrective of the efficient self in so far as it synthesizes all "heres" and "nows".[22] Pure time, is not a string of separate instants, it is an organic whole in which the past is not left behind, but is moving alongwith, and operating in, the present. And the future is given to it not as lying before, yet to be traversed; it is given in the sense that it is present in its nature as an open possibility. It is time regarded as an organic whole that the Quran describes as "Taqdir" or destiny. Destiny is time regarded as prior to the disclosure of its possibilities. It is time freed from the net of causal sequence. In one word, it is time as felt and not as thought and calculated. Time regarded as destiny forms the very essence of things. As the Quran says, "God created all things and assigned to each its destiny." If, then, time is real, and not a mere repetition of homogeneous moments which make conscious experience a delusion, then every moment is original, giving birth to what is absolutely novel and unforeseeable.[23]

The problem of time is the central theme of Iqbal's famous book, *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*. Iqbal's interest in the concept of time is not merely speculative. It has, according to him, immense practical value. He holds

22. Op. cit., p. 49.

23. Ibid., p. 50.

that the problem of time is a matter of life and death for a historically conscious and growing community. The practical implications of Iqbal's belief in the reality of time are very clear. If time is an illusion, the march of history is insignificant. If the course of evolution is predetermined, then the future becomes a meaningless term. If past, which is irrevocable determines the entire present and the future, then, no individual or community can be optimistic about future ; it has already become a fact. But for Iqbal, time is essentially creative and unpredictable, whose true nature can be grasped only through inner experience. Therefore, history is not a mere unfolding of the static divine will. Its course is always open with unlimited possibilities. The future is not predetermined by the past ; it is an open challenge and can only be met by creative spirits free from the self-created bondage and slavery of serial time.[24]

Iqbal exclaims at this self-created bondage and slavery :

> Look, O Thou enthralled by Yesterday and Tomorrow
> Behold another world in thine own heart
> Thou hast sown the seed of darkness in the clay
> Thou hast imagined Time as a line
> Thy thought measures length of Time
> With the measure of night and day
> Thou hast extended Time, like space

24. Hafeez Malik, *Iqbal : The Poet-Philosopher of Pakistan*, pp. 252-53.

And distinguished Yesterday from Tomorrow
Thou hast fled, like a scent, from thine own garden
Thou hast made thy prison with thine own hands[25]

It is not easy to solve the mystery of time. Augustine's profound words are as true today as they were when they were uttered ; if no one questions me of time, I know it ; if I have to explain it to a questioner, I know it not. Not only logic abhors time, but systematic theology is also an enemy of time. It has not received better treatment from the mystics, as mystic experience has invariably been associated with eternity ; and time is opposed to eternity. God has always been described as outside space and time, but it is obvious that space and time cannot be considered outside God, in the same sense in which God is supposed to be outside space and time. The inescapable conclusion is that such terms do not correspond to anything real. But time is undoubtedly a fact of experience, but it comes into conflict with another fact of experience, i.e., religious consciousness, which always tends to transcend time and time-relations. It is a matter of grave importance for a religiously inclined thinker to reconcile these two divergent claims. This is precisely the problem that Iqbal is facing i.e., how to reconcile eternity with change ; because, the spiritual basis of all life as conceived by Islam is eternal and reveals itself in variety and change. Since the source of these eternal principles is revelation, the reconciliation is a chal-

25. Mohammad Iqbal, *The Secrets of the Self*, pp. 80-82.

lenging task. To achieve this end, Iqbal rebels against the classical spirit of Muslim theology, imbibing the best elements of the anticlassical and romantic movements of the twentieth century and synthesizing them with the romantic traditions of Sufism.[26]

The reality of time cannot be reconciled with a rigid, logical and intellectual frame of mind. Assertion about time generates an attitude of mind which, if not anti-intellectual, is suspicious of the total claims of intellect. As only serial time can be grasped by intellect and not pure duration, hence there must be some other source of knowledge, which does not negate scientific method, but rises above it and is capable of giving a deeper understanding of the nature of reality, including pure duration. For Iqbal, as for Bergson, this source of knowledge is intuition, by which one can "feel" time. Iqbal does not entirely agree with any contemporary philosopher of time, although in varying degrees he is influenced by all of them. Bergson, of course, exercised the major influence on Iqbal, but the Muslim thinker is by no means alone in his indebtedness to the French philosopher. Whitehead has, on more than one occasion, admitted that Bergson was an important influence in the development of his philosophy of time and organism.

Iqbal was a thoroughly committed Muslim, and his philosophy of space and time displays a marked

26. Hafeez Malik, *Iqbal: Poet-Philosopher of Pakistan*, pp. 255-256.

mystic trend. For Iqbal, God is infinite, and infinity demands that He must be above time and the relations of time. He is the beginning and the end. One can think of time in God, but one cannot think of God in time. Iqbal, in his poem in *Payam-e-Mashriq*, "*La ilaha ill-Allah*" says :

خرد ہوئی ہے زمان و مکان کی زناری
نہ ہے زماں نہ مکاں لا الہ الا اللہ

—*Rizwan-ul-Islam*

CHAPTER VII

"Juridical Aspect in the Dynamism of Islam"

Ijtihad or the Principle of Movement is a vital aspect of the *Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, which was the main object before Iqbal. As Iqbal Advocates, the movement of reorientation, which means necessary adjustment and re-adjustment of *fiqah* in view of the changing requirements of life, should cease at no stage. This is the dynamism in his religious thought. The author has approached the subject with his philosophical and legal background. (*Editor*)

'Being and Becoming' is the basic principle of Heraclitus' Philosophy. The moot point is whether change is real or illusory. His adversary Parmenides holds that it is permanence which could be identified with reality. For how could a fleeting flux give the identity of unity? When Prophet Abraham refused to bow down before Sun, Moon, stars and other cosmic and terrestrial creatures believing them as Deity, it was precisely the point lurking in his mind that how Divinity could be identified with something that at one time it is and at other it is not. It has no uniqueness and no permanence. Take a Quranic message which asserts

thus : 'Abraham was not a Jew nor a Christian but he was an upright man, a Muslim ; and he was not one of the polytheists...".[1] Yet Abraham never recited the *kalima*, by which one resolutely asserts the unity of God and prophethood of Muhammad. When the Quran describes Abraham as a Muslim merely it denotes the uprightness of Abraham who insisted on following the truth. He sought for the Enduring and the Omnipotent. So something, substance, or quality has point of reference for the sake of communication and knowledge. But that is not all. The real aspect of mundane things is that they undergo change all the time—may be imperceptible in nature. That is why Heraclitus' viewpoint is more nearer to reality. Iqbal has accepted this thought more profitably in order to remould or reorientate the Islamic polity which had already withered and was about to be collapsed in the 19th century all over the world.

Islam regards both these aspects of change and permanence as the essence of life. Exigencies of life are regularised in keeping with some fixed, unchangeable laws. But this much is not sufficient enough. In order to proceed with further development constant evaluation is necessary and that is another form of change. Hence it is ceaseless change that paves the way for more and more development and perfection. According to Iqbal, time and space

1. The Qur'an, 3 : 66.

have no abiding aspects. Rather these are diverse angles of views which life demands at various stages. Perceptual knowledge is settled in these moulds so far as this world is concerned. The universe, according to the Quran is not created for idle sport "—it is not without a purpose or a goal; it is throughout teleological and to this universal teleology human beings are no exception. To everyone of them there is a goal—and that goal is God Himself. In order that we may apprehend what we cannot comprehend. He uses similitudes from our own experience. Divine attributes are the ultimate human ideals. Man's highest perfection, therefore, consists in the achievement and assimilation of divine attributes. It is to this capture of Divine attributes to which Iqbal refers—God desires nothing but the perfection of His light"[2]—the perfection of these attributes. The sole aim of man is, therefore, a progressive achievement of life divine which consists in the gradual acquisition of all divine attributes.

Change and dynamism is the very stuff on which living and social patterns are made. So much degradation and humiliation ever since the downfall of Muslim rule in India was ascribed either due to our moral lapses or to the alien rule who wish us to degenerate gradually and may forget the old glorious past. But nobody seems to admit that men make their own fate according to their understanding of

2. یزداں بکمند آور اے ہمت مردانہ

the nature of change in the phenomenon and the laws of the dynamics of human society.

Iqbal's thought was the fulfilment of the urge in our national Psyche which went to seize of this fact —the fact of change. It is also desirable to create in ourselves the capacity to meet the challenge of all times. Such challenges are too many in one's life-time. In order to overcome, one exerts to the best of his ability. Iqbal's thought are the focal point in all our national being. In him is collected together the contradictions of our old and new self. To resolve these contradictions it paves the way to the emergence of a new order and a new person. Iqbal in his famous poem *Asrar-i-Khudi* forcefully decries the changelessness view of life and society. When he challenges the well-established authority in the person of Khwaja Hafiz as delineated in that poem he really meant to abhor the static and fixed order of Islamic polity. It was for this reason that Iqbal calls for the reintroduction of *Ijtihad*—a principle of movement in Islam. His aim was to reconstruct religious thought of Islam. He has emphasised vehemently that the decadence in our system all round ever since the fall of Baghdad is only on account of the fact that primitive system and an attitude—'refusal to think' is dominant because of the attitudes of obscurantists and conformists. The present day struggle in our society between the protagonists of an 'unchanging Islamic' system and

those who endeavour to bring about change and progressive outlook dates back to Iqbal's that period when germination or gestation of ideas and thinking took place. In this well celebrated book comprising of lectures on the *Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, he has provided us a comprehensive critique on the necessity for change in life and the law which is the kernel of Islamic way of civilization. Iqbal asserts that Islamic society must need a constant evaluation and ceaseless change in the old order.[3] Whenever and wherever it so becomes necessary in order to wipe out what is abhorrent and inappropriate for the general good of the people the time honoured principles of dynamism be invoked. This is the surest way of salvation and restoration of what was splendid in the glorious past. In his poem entitled *Farman-e-Khuda* which is actually a discourse addressed to angels by God Himself he recommends for the annihilation of primitive, forlorn order whenever it is apparent.[4] The principle of *Ijtihad* has got to be sustained and preserved otherwise our society cannot go a step forward in the task of transforming our mode of existence. The core of his philosophy is the concept of changing the law of Islam.

Conception of *Ijtihad* is not altogether unknown

3. سکوں محال ہے قدرت کے کارخانے میں
ثبات ایک تغیر کو ہے زمانے میں
4. جو نقش کہن تم کو نظر آئے مٹا دو

to Islam. Literally the word means 'to exert'—exerting one's self to the utmost degree or to the best of one's ability in order to obtain an object or an inference. When this word is taken in its technical sense it may mean the application of the authorities of law with a view to find out what in all probability is the law. The Quran, the Traditions and the *Ijma* are the authorities of law. So, in a matter which is not covered by the express words of such texts a resort has to be made by exercising the judgement.[5] *Ijtihad* is the exercise of judgement—to draw out deductions in matters of law not explicitly or implicitly covered by the first three sources of law. Naturally the person formulating such inferences in law is known as *Mujtahid*. But his speciality consists in formal inference only.

In religious and legal matters this sort of reasoning is approved of vehemently. The Holy Quran is full of exhortations as in the following verses asking the believers to exercise their reason and intelligence.

1. "Do you not reflect" ?
2. "There are signs in this for a people who reflect".
3. "There are signs in this for a people who understand".
4. "And to those who exert me show Our path".

We may have many similar Quranic injunctions which invoke exertion of inductive reasoning. This

5. A. Rahim, Cf. : *Muslim Jurisprudence*, p. 168.

kind of effort takes three courses. One may either start by way of analogical deductions and through parity of reasoning come to a certain conclusion or legal position in order to find out the basic cause of a particular provision of law. Secondly, one may endeavour to draw out some universal method or general principle as the basis of reasoning with a view to come to a certain conclusion. In other words, this may mean the regulative principle of reasoning ; and thirdly, one may by mere conjecture or approximation reach the results, if the nature of the case permits it to be so deduced. These are all intellectual attempts at one time or the other. Such an effort as stated above is more or less inherent in a man and *Ijtihad* is, therefore, a mere verbal expression of an instinctive urge for knowledge, research and discovery. Exactly, this is the spirit which paves the way for the discovery of various truths, spiritual, scientific, political or economic.

Degrees of Ijtihad ; The Islamic schools of law recognise three degrees of *Ijtihad* according to Iqbal, as stated in his famous lecture on the *Principle of Movement in Islam* :

1. Complete authority in legislation which is practically confined to the founders of the schools.
2. Relative authority which is to be exercised within the limits of a particular school.
3. Special authority which relates to the determ-

ining of the law applicable to a particular case left undetermined by the founders.

In Islam there are four schools of Muslim Juristic Law. They originate from their respective founders, namely, Imam Abu Hanifah, Imam Malik, Imam Shafi and Imam Ahmad Ibn Hanbal. They are called *Mujtahidin fish-shara*; the jurists who founded schools of law.[6] Iqbal's viewpoint is that complete authority in legislation be justified.[7] Sunni sect believes in principle that this sort of *Ijtihad* is possible. But the person concerned must fulfil those requisite qualification who is supposed to proceed in this type of formulations. For lack of such a measure Iqbal says that "the idea of complete *Ijtihad* is hedged round by conditions which are well-nigh impossible of realisation in a single individual".[8] He has emphasised that it is of utmost importance to re-orientate the reconstruction of Islamic *Fiqah*. In order to do so such personages are needed who are well-versed in Islamic *Shariat* and above all have deep acquaintance in modern way of life, culture, civilisation, polity and customs. But sad to say that such people of higher excellence are nowhere to be found[9]. Should one take into consideration under the prevailing circumstances that the door to *Ijtihad* has now been closed for good? Precisely, Iqbal is very much

6. Sir Abdur Rahim's, *Mohammadan Jurisprudence*, p. 194.
7. *Reconstruction*, p. 144.
8. Ibid., p. 49.
9. K. A. Hakim, *Fikr-i-Iqbal*, p. 671.

against this sort of attitude and abhors inertia and stay. Constant and ceaseless efforts are required to enrich life.

هر لحظہ نیا طور نئی برق تجلی
اللہ کرے مرحلۂ شوق نہ هو طے

European type of Democracy has no place in an Islamic state. Professor Ahmad Hassan Dani of the Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad quotes Mr. Justice (Rtd.) A. R. Changez wherein he has stated "that according to the Holy Quran sovereignty rests with Allah alone, and He is the sole Law-giver". Further, in "the Holy Quran the Islamic form of government is described by the term khalifa which means vicegerent or deputy of God Almighty, who is a *de-jure* and *de-facto* sovereign".[10] The worthy Professor ponders here that how that power is to be managed in this world ? These are some of the ticklish questions which the jurists of our country have to solve. Democracy has been acclaimed all over the country but our demand is to Islamise it—to suit the ideology of Pakistan.

Such problems require the concerted efforts of *Mujtahidin* and *Ijtihad* is the only way. Another instance is also of interest. Sometimes back a news bulletin was telecast on the P.T.V. that the Korangi abbetoir is lying idle for the last so many years for want of butchers because no one is prepared to dispose of slaughtering animals on the machines. The

10. *The Daily Pakistan Times*, dated Sep. 15, 1977.

primitive practice of slaughtering the animals to them is more humane and nearer to Islamic diction and style. But as compared to mechanical way of handling the animals is not all desirable. This is again, an issue which requires the pronouncement of a *Mujtahid* who could settle once for all what is, befitting and what not. Today, all over the world age of technology has done wonders and no one can under-estimate the good that machines have done for humanity. Hence it is of utmost importance that old order should be replaced to make room for that which is the dire need of the time. On the same lines one could mention the case of Sunni Law of inheritance so that social justice could be re-emphasised and restored. Gone is the time when woman was regarded an economic dependent. With the spread of education and awakening on all sides economic dependence is lessened. On comparative basis neither the psychological, economic nor the social circumstances are just the same.

Iqbal poses this question in his lecture, aforementioned, 'Is the law of Islam capable of evolution ?' By quoting Professor Horten, Iqbal is of the view that the Muslims have always adjusted their religious outlook to the elements of culture which they assimilate from the people that surrounded them".[11] Further he says, again quoting another orientalist Professor Hurgronje that "The assimilative spirit of

11. *Reconstruction*, p. 164.

Islam is even more manifest in the sphere of law".[12] This much is settled that the law of Islam is not stationary or incapable of development. The problem is only this much that public opinion has not yet been mobilised to seize of this issue that a critical evolution of *Fiqah* is most necessary. Iqbal is of the view that if it is undertaken the conservative Muslim public may become displeased. He has himself offered the following critical remarks in this connection. Let us restate them for consideration :

1. There had been no written law of Islam apart from the Quran, from the earliest times upto the rise of the Abbasides.
2. From the middle of the first century up to the beginning of the fourth, not less than nineteen schools of law and legal opinion appeared in Islam. This is suggestive of the fact that our early jurists incessantly worked in order to meet the necessities of a growing civilisation. —Further, the various schools of legal opinion passed from the deductive to the inductive attitude in their endeavour to interpret.
3. The rigidity of our recognised schools disappears and the possibility of a further evolution becomes perfectly clear when we study the four accepted sources of Mohammadan Law and the resulting polemics.

12. Op. cit., p. 164.

Granted that Islamic social order is dynamic and admits change and that *Ijtihad* is the principle of movement in the social structure of Islam yet we find that Muslims are deprived of their due status and do not weigh much among the ideological and cultural orders of the world. We do get the impression that this nation is disorganised, poverty-stricken, illiterate, devoid of taking the initiative. Iqbal had to face the same situation and opines that humanity needs three things to-day :

1. Spiritual interpretation of the Universe,
2. Spiritual emancipation of the individual,
3. Basic principles of the Universal import directing the evolution of society on spiritual basis.

For Muslim nation Iqbal has the prophetic warnings as enunciated by him in these words : "Let the Muslim of to-day appreciate his position, reconstruct his social life in the light of ultimate principles and evolve out of the hitherto partially revealed purpose of Islam—that spiritual democracy is the ultimate aim of Islam."[14]

In the democratic form of government the institution of legislative assembly is an important constituent and is charged with the responsibility of framing laws. For the interpretation of law and legal phraseology persons equipped with the subtleties of Mohammadan

13. Op. cit., p. 179.
14. Ibid., p. 180.

law may comprise of that unit. Iqbal opines that not all the members are expected to possess this much of excellence and hence may commit erroneous interpretation.[15] To obviate this eventuality, council of Islamic ideology having the power to supervise the legislative activity of the assembly be constituted. Such a body of ulema conversant with the affairs of the world was incorporated in the Persian Constitution of 1906. Pakistan has since its very inception accepted this legal structure and the council is doing its very best in the process of Islamisation of all laws, statutes and customs. But Iqbal here has a word of caution and that is "—the arrangement is not free from danger. It may be tried, if at all only as a temporary measure in Sunni Countries."[16] Further he suggests that there is a dire need of reforming the present system of legal education in Muslim countries as it would help enable them to avoid the possibilities of erroneous interpretation. The idea is to catch up the time by exercising juridical inference. In no less clear terms is *Ijtihad* or exercise of reason recognised as a source of Muslim law in the traditions of the Prophet. The following Hadith is universally acclaimed by all the schools of Jurisprudence as the basis of *Ijtihad* in Islam. When Muaz bin Jabal, one of the companions was appointed as governor of Yaman, the Holy Prophet asked him, "According to what shall thou judge in settling issues, O my brother ?" "According

15. Op. cit., p. 175.

16. Ibid., p. 148.

to the law of the Quran", replied Muaz bin Jabal. "And if you do not find anything therein?" Questioned the Prophet. "Then I will act according to the Sunnah of the Prophet", replied Muaz bin Jabal. "But if you do not find any thing in the Sunnah to guide you?" asked the Prophet. "Then I shall use my own reasoning", said Muaz bin Jabal. Thereupon, the Prophet raised his hands and said "Praise be to Allah Who has favoured the messenger of His Messenger with what His Messenger is willing to approve".[17] This Hadith clearly shows that in matters unprovided for either in the Qur'an or the Sunnah, exercise of one's own reasoning and judgement was a familiar and laudable practice among the companions even during the lifetime of the Prophet. To quote Iqbal it was the permissible practice of that time as Qazi Shaukani tells us.

In the end, Iqbal fervently appeals to the Muslim Millat to re-evaluate and reconstruct his social milieu in the light of ultimate principles. To him, spiritual democracy is the 'ultimate aim of Islam'.[18]

—Professor Saeed Ahmad

17. A. Rahim, *Muslim Jursipudence*, p. 168.
18. Op. cit., p. 180.

CHAPTER VIII

Iqbal's Concept of an Islamic State

Iqbal disavowed the modern European view of State, according to which State has nothing to do with religion. To him, on the contrary, religion and State are closely related, rather State is an external objectification of religion ; it is the body whereof religion is the soul. The author in this article has brought out this aspect of Iqbal's concept of the State. (*Editor*)

In the preface to the lectures, otherwise known as *The Reconstrŭction of Religious Thought in Islam*, Iqbal believes that frontiers of knowledge and experience are far and wide and it is one's endeavour to what extent he can go. He does not claim any finality in philosophical thinking. Rather he believes that with the advancement in the areas of learning and wisdom new avenues of thought are opened. It is our business to go on watching and assessing the tone and tenor of human thought. After that, it becomes incumbent on us to build a critical evolution of the new-found piece of knowledge. It is this spirit which he wishes to inculcate in those who can discern and weigh.

The quality of Iqbal's thought is that it is progressive and admits of possibilities of innumerable changes. Yet there is one thing which sustains no innovation of sorts and that is the sovereignty and independence of states. In quoting the Turkish poet Zia, Iqbal lays down the basic principles of a state in the following words. ". . . In order to create a really effective political unity of Islam all Muslim countries must first become independent : and then in their totality they should range themselves under the Caliph. Is such a thing possible at the present moment ? If not today, one must wait. In the meantime the Caliph must reduce his own house to order and lay the foundations of a workable modern state . . ."[1]

The sine qua non of this discourse is the attainment of independence in order to create a political unity of Islam and then to gravitate around one Caliph. Further, Iqbal believes that, "in the international world, the weak find no sympathy ; power alone deserves respect". If unity engenders strength the symbol of power to wield influence, to mobilise public opinion of the masses and power to strengthen and make boundaries secure, are some of the verities of a state. Above all, power : potential and actual must find its expression in the shaping of a welfare state. Peace, tranquillity and the opportunity of self-aggrandisement in all walks of life be ensured for the collective good of all. Iqbal observes that "centuries

1. *Reconstruction*, p. 159.

ago Ibn-i-Khaldun who personally believed in the condition of Qarshiyat in the Khalifa argued that "since the power of the Qureish has gone, there is no alternative but to accept the most powerful man as Imam in the country where he happens to be powerful".[2] The latter is the defender of Faith; lord spiritual and temporal and hence his is the power that matters.

Such is the concept of an Islamic State according to Iqbal. Power is not a brute force as anyone might like to take it but a charm to knit together scattered men and ideas so as to make a block or common wealth. Such a unit of free and independent countries would form a 'living family of republics'.[3] This could become possible if ever rivalries are settled and harmonised by the cementing bond of a common spiritual goal and aspiration. Iqbal believes that "Islam is neither nationalism nor imperialism but a league of nations which recognises artificial boundaries and racial distinctions for reference sake".[4] It is not for restricting the social horizon of its members.

From what it has been stated, a modern Muslim State may have independence and a sovereign status with loose boundaries with other Muslim brethren countries. This arrangement would give a semblance of unity and oneness of purpose, forgetting all petty-mindedness and mutual jealousies. In the political

2. Op. cit., p. 159.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid.

parlance, this coherence may be known as confederacy in which all the member-states are vital and integral constituents. Iqbal's viewpoint regarding statehood is not earthrooted. It pervades through and through wherever brethren of faith happen to live. Each member-state is merely the sentinel of law and order so far as territorial bounds are concerned. But for administration and planning there is no known barrier. Each one of them conceives for the greater good of the 'millat' so as to institute a welfare state catering for the need and prosperity of all. Basically Iqbal himself, a visionary conceives the Islamic civilisation as a unified common-wealth of nationalities in which Tehran is the hub of all Muslim activities...Elsewhere, in his *Bal-e-Jibril* he fervently aspires that Tehran should be the Geneva of the Eastern world and if it is like that, the fate of the whole world may radically change for good. This implies that a potent *millat-e-Islamia* may have a coercive power to dominate over pagans and nonbelievers. We may mention here that to the delight of all Muslims, Iqbal's dream is getting fruition. Already we find that the R.C.D. Pact is a proof of that glorious idea which Iqbal once happened to conceive. Many more steps are in the embroynic form towards this direction and the day is not far off when integration and unity of thought and purpose is achieved.

Noumann, an orientalist, laments that "Primitive Christianity attached no value to the preservation of

the state, law, organisation, production. It simply does not reflect on the conditions of human society. As a concluding remark he says that we either dare to aim at being without a state and thus throw ourselves deliberately into the arms of anarchy or we decide to possess alongside of our religious creed, a political creed as well".[5] To this Iqbal adds, "Thus the Quran considers it necessary to unite religion and state, ethics and politics in a single revelation much in the same way as Plato does in his Republic".[6] The foregoing paragraph is a composite of Naumann's observation as appearing in his 'Brief uber Religion', and Iqbal's summation thereon. It is interesting to note that of all the persons Iqbal pays tribute to a Greek thinker who is a celebrated author of the utopia. The latter is a terrestrial account of human wisdom, while the Quran is an ethereal account of divine origin. Elsewhere Iqbal also states, "we are now in a position to see the true significance of the intellectual revolt of Islam against Greek Philosophy".[7] Possibly his identification of the one with the other is only to the extent of construct, make-up and outline and not the true import or substance as given in the holy book.

The institution of state, so therefore, is an important aspect of human civilisation. Man being a rational creature, and as was created in the very

5. Op. cit., p. 166. Ibid.
7. Ibid., p. 142.

image of God. how could it be left to the mercy of brute force. Hence the justification of state. It is sheer degeneration to the level of beasts if state is not there. The Quran is a complete code of our whole existence which envelops all the verities of human expression. The institution of state is a symbol of the highest development that mankind could achieve. The holy book has laid down the guideline of the mode of governance of an Islamic state. For instance, God being the sole creator, is the Sovereign of the entire universe and the authority rests with none but Allah. (S. 12 : 40) ; and the Law is His (S. 7 : 54). The sovereignty of Allah is the basic principle of Islam. His vicegerent or khalifa has to follow strictly the commandments of God. The Khalifa may have advisers for running the government because consultation is required from those who are experts in the areas of their own excellence. A 'majlis-e-Shura' has to be constituted because that would also help enable the head of the state not to transgress the bounds prescribed by Allah Islamic form of government according to the Quran is 'Khalafat'. The Holy Prophet was the first Head of the Islamic State. In his person, all the spiritual and temporal aspects culminate. All Powers whether executive, judicial or legislative are vested in him. So his is a model for all times to come to be followed by any present or future chief Executive of the State.

State and Church :

Curiously enough the spirit of the new theory of

Mohammadan Law based on the modern concepts of Sociology as formulated by Halim Sabit in Turkey tangently goes against the Islamic model of a state. As said earlier, the temporal, the spiritual and the mundane realities of life are conjoined in the latter, but to the religio-political thought in Turkey of Iqbal's days are poles apart. Iqbal has great misgivings on this Turkish brand of the renaissance of Islam. According to this, the Nationalist Party of Turkey intended religious reforms. Religion to them is not of any supreme interest. It is the state. "With these thinkers", to quote again Iqbal, "religion as such has independent function. The state is the essential factor in national life which determines the character and function of all other factors". Religion and state are two separate entities. In other words, the state can afford to be secular. In his estimation, this system is contrary to Islamic creed. Rather temporal and spiritual are indivisible aspects as Islam is a single unanalysable reality. Here one fails to comprehend the justification of a reform which is diametrically opposed to the model which the Holy Prophet himself carved, established and practised.

One could adduce a couple of reasons for that ; one of them may be the newly acquired autonomy of the church in the Christendom. The bifurcation of the church and the state was necessitated in the Christian Europe owing to the inevitable confrontation, because Primitive Christianity was not a civil or poli-

tical entity. Later on when the state became Christian and the church got its autonomy from a state of monastic order the dispute became so obvious. This influence might have a telling effect on the Turks as well. They were induced for this sort of separation as was the case in Europe'.[8] Another factor might be put in this way that, probably to discard the nickname, 'the sick man of Europe' as coined by the Christian Europe, the Nationalist Party of Turkey had to resort to this sort of measure. None the less, this was a retrograde step comparing the Quranic concept as stated earlier.

From Iqbal's point of view, an Islamic state would be a theocracy if it endeavours to transform the essence of 'Tauhid' into Space-Time forces with this utmost yearning that these ideal principles may be realised in a definite human organisation. Such concepts as equality, solidarity and freedom, are the practical aspects of the notion of 'Tauhid'. Any discerning intellect would be wonder-struck when made to realise how Iqbal had shown the beacon light for the resuscitation of that order which was once a living and pulsating era of our civilisation. Keeping in view this state of affairs should one bear in mind that an accomplished form of an Islamic state is a theocracy ?

Islamic Universalism or Islamianism :

Iqbal mentions with appreciation the viewpoint

8. Ibid., p. 155.

of Said Halim Pasha, a Turkish leader. The Religious Reform Party to whom the latter belonged emphasised the international spirit of Islam. He observed that there is no Turkish, Arabian, Persian or Indian Islam as there is no English mathematics, German astronomy or French chemistry. Inspired by this viewpoint, Iqbal endorsed that "Islam being a harmony of idealism and positivism and as a unity of the eternal verities of freedom, equality and solidarity has no fatherland".[9] But in spite of that, the universal character of Islamic Truth creates varieties of national, moral and social ideals.[10] This means that the totality represents the constituents with distinct mark and imprints. Iqbal draws an analogy from varieties of scientific national cultures, which in their totality represent human knowledge. So, his point may suggest the classical dictum 'unity in diversity' where the whole represents the parts and could not be read in isolation. What is more and what is less could not be determined. To my mind both are the contributing factors. It is only the National Ego—Ego which the two aforementioned sages disown. To Said Halim Pasha it is sheer barbarism.

The universal trend all over the world is territory-bound and localised may be due to the Western influence where each is, a highly industrialised nation of the world. They can better promote their own magnetic charm. The liberated countries of Afro-

9. Op. cit. p. 156.	10. Ibid.

Asia after the World War I were highly spirited in this regard. For them love for the territory, and distinct character of their individuality is of prime importance. That is why the Sultanate of Osmania got pulverised and reduced to shambles. A polemic between nationalism and internationalism can be resolved if Iqbal's views are scanned and interpreted as an organic whole where each part is an integral and vital constituent, the one cannot thrive without the other.

Both these scholars bemoan that to-day the cherished ideals of Islam are nationalistic, localised and tinged with the pagan cultures of native lands whereever Islam reached. The crying need of the time is, as suggested by Iqbal and the Turkish Grand Vizier, "to tear off from Islam the hard crust which has immobilised an essentially dynamic outlook on life, and to rediscover the original verities of freedom, equality and political ideals out of their original simplicity and universality".[11] It is true that under the influence of the native cultures the moral and social ideals of Islam have been gradually de-Islamised and depict more local and territorial aspects which is highly deplorable. Iqbal laments that in this way "The pure brow of the principle of Tauhid, has received more or less an impress of heathenism."[12] Naturally, this state of affair has played havoc on the universal and impersonal character of the ethical ideals of

11. Op. cit., p. 156. 12. Ibid.

Islam. The arduous task of any Islamic state, under these circumstances, would be to restore the pristine glory of Islam. The gold has to be made pure of dross. The mechanics of this process has to be spelled out and then an era of glorious past may dawn as envisaged by Iqbal.

The Quaid-i-Azam in his 1917 Presidential address delivered at the Lucknow Session of the All India Muslim League stated,...and when the terrible ordeal has passed, the liberated soul will feel almost primeval ease and power to plan, to build and to create fresh, ampler and freer conditions of life for the future. What he at one time ardently desired could only be accomplished by the attainment of a free democratic state. Pakistan, a state of his dream, is a reality now. Some thirty years back it was carved out from a land mass where an amalgam of alien and pagan cultures thrived and where Islamic creed through years of neglect and inattention got adulterated and heathenised. So it is high time to exert and to make Muslim culture depict true Islamic spirit.

The monster of strife, greed and territorial ambition is ever on the rampage. To ward off this aspect the spirit of unity and patriotism has to be inculcated. People be educated and taught to preserve the sacred trust of God. Unless baser passions are curbed and tamed it may not be possible to preserve what God has bestowed. This necessitates to create patriotism and nationhood more than the whole which

is the international aspect of Islam and on which Iqbal lays greater stress.

The Quaid envisaged nationalism when he remarked in a message delivered to the Muslim youth in 1937, that "The League has adopted completely nationalistic programme".[13] This might be a political stance vis-a-vis Hindu Congress. Of course, it could not be read in the same context in which Iqbal had formulated his discourse aforementioned. Iqbal wrote in a famous letter to R. A. Nicholson concerning democracy. "Thus the kingdom of God on earth means the democracy of more or less unique individuals, presided over by the most unique individual possible on this earth".[14] To my mind no definitive injunction on the form of the state is available in the Holy Quran. Unlike the laws of Islam which are eternal, no form of government can be prescribed which will be eternal and will continue to satisfy the needs and further the interests of Muslims at all times, in all places and in all climates. The Quran advisedly does not lay down any definite form of government beyond prescribing that the will of the people must find expression in it. We may refer to the following verses of the holy book in which the same principle has been laid down :

(1) "And their laws are promulgated by mutual consultation or their government is based

13. The Aligarh Magazine Spring Number, 1937.
14. *Javid-Nama*, A. J. Arberry (Eng ·Trans.) Introduction, p. 11.

on their mutual consultation."[15]

(2) "And consult them on the affairs of the government."[16]

Consultation is, therefore, a necessary aspect. Iqbal also appreciates that Turkish view is perfectly sound, according to which the formulation is "that the spirit of Islam recommends that the Caliphate or Imamate can be vested in a body of persons or an elected Assembly."[17]

Islam does not wish to stand in the way of Muslims in devising the form of government that advances their interests at any particular epoch and having establisded one system of government does not bar their right to change it if they so desire. If we further realise that the rights and status of an elector in a Muslim state are nowhere defined rigidly the conclusion to which we are forced is that there is no such thing as a defined type of an Islamic State. Every form of state is Islamic which at any stage is based on the will of the people and according to them or majority of them advances their interests best. The basis of its laws must, however, be the Quran and the precepts of the Prophet. The moment it ceases to enforce the injunctions of the Quran it shall forfeit its claim to be an Islamic State.

It may not be out of place to mention the emerg-

15. *Ash-Shura*, Ch. 62, versa 38. 16. *Al-i-Imran*, Ch. 3, verse 158.
17. Ibid., p. 157.

ence of Muslim nationalism in the sub-continent. Not only in India but also elsewhere Islam has a cohesive power to integrate the new converts because of common ideals and norms. They have a strong bond of brotherhood so as to form a monolithic unity. Religion has a basis of Muslim cohesion because of identity of sentiments, goals, and aspirations. It is a potent factor responsible for fostering group integration among the Muslims. The effect of Islam on Indian Muslim has been so pervasive as to permeate their entire way of life in order to create a distinct Muslim civilization. This sort of thing hardly resembles with that of Hindus. Two-nation theory was a visible reality. On the same basis Pakistan was achieved.

The Quaid-i-Azam described Muslims as a distinct nation back in 1939. Again, in a broadcast talk to the people of Australia on Feb. 19, 1948, he observed, "The great majority of us are Muslims. We follow the teachings of the Prophet Mohammad (be peace upon him). We are members of the brotherhood of Islam in which all are equal in right, dignity and self-respect. Consequently, we have a very deep sense of unity. But we make no mistake. Pakistan is not a theocracy or anything like it. Islam demands from us the tolerance of other creeds.—Not only are most of us Muslims but we have our own history, customs and traditions and those ways of thought, outlook and instinct which go to make up a sense of

nationality."[18]

Iqbal's thoughts are some forty years old as he died in 1938. Naturally, all that what he professed and preached was in a specific context. Muslims were doing their utmost to rise as a distinct nation in the comity of nationalities. The achievement of a Muslim state on the Indian subcontinent was unthinkable. The very idea of a Muslim state was like a cry in the wilderness. Yet in spite of the odds, he presented the profile of a state and the objectives thereto. As stated earlier Iqbal emphatically states that finality cannot be achieved in a single stroke as regards philosophical thinking. It is with the ever new experiences and advancements that new avenues of thought are opened and many of them extended in course of time. So is the case with the Islamic State and its Constitution. The experiences of the Quaid in his struggle for the achievement of Pakistan gave him new vision and a unique ideology the outline of which is apparent in his broadcast talk stated earlier. It is an embodiment of all that what Iqbal visualised and what he formulated was nothing but the re-orientation of Islamic spirit as envisaged in the holy book.

We must not forget his insistence on the principle of *Ijtihad*. Time and again he lays stress on the necessity of this measure. Let the body of eminent scholars contrive the envisaged model of an Islamic

18. *Extract from the Daily 'The Pakistan Times,'* dated 14th August, 1976.

State keeping in view the modern time. It is mutual consultation and collaboration of all that matters in order to bring forth the real concept of an Islamic State.

—Professor Saeed Ahmad

CHAPTER IX

Iqbal's Concept of Muslim Nationalism (Millat)*

Iqbal was a great nationalist. But his nationalism was not restricted to race-bound or territory-bound sense of the word, as it is ordinarily understood. His nationalism was co-extensive with the muslim world, and eventually aimed at enlarging into a world-wide or humanity-wide notion of nationalism. The author has taken up this aspect of Iqbal, and has quite vastly depicted his thinking on the subject. (*Editor*)

Iqbal's name is connected with an important stage in the development of the concept of Muslim Nationalism on the Indo-Pakistan sub-continent. His religio-

* I have used the word "Millat" as synonymous with "Muslim Nationalism" in the present article as well as the title. I have done so as I believe that though the use of the expression "Muslim Nationalism" is in vogue to express the consciousness of a group of muslim people to be loyal to a certain territory as and up to the extent permitted in Islam, but, I think that the word "Millat" expresses the sentiment of loyalty to a certain territory up to the extent allowed in Islam in a better way ; because the expression "Muslim Nationalism may sometimes be taken to mean, in the manner of Christian Europe" muslims living in a certain territorial unit, worshipping the same, and all of whose actions and aspirations being ultimately determined by the consideration of that territorial unit", which is tantamount to deify a piece of territory, and is contrary to the spirit of Islam as well as Iqbal's views on Muslim Nationalism and in this sense, it would in fact be a hybrid expression.

philosophical and socio-political views fully reflected the complexity and contradictoriness of the social nature of the muslim populace of the subcontinent that were taking part in the national liberation movement. In view of the multi-lingual and multi-racial character of the muslim inhabitants of the subcontinent as well as financial hardships of the muslim minority vis-a-vis rather affluent hindu majority, Iqbal felt the need of a new national ideology capable of cementing together a multi-lingual and multi-racial people with widely different local cultures and customs on the basis of their common faith, Islam, oneness of God and finality of the Prophethood of Muhammad. But the formation of a new national ideology is almost always linked with the reformation of religion. Iqbal was perhaps the first reformer of Islam who tried to find in it not only the spiritual expression of the nationalist aspirations of the muslims of colonial India but also the basis of a path of social development such as would be distinct from the capitalist path of the west intoxicated by the frenzy of national aggrandisement.

In order to grasp fully the development of Iqbal's concept of Muslim Nationalism or Millat it would, I think, be proper to give a brief account of the historical circumstances as well as his times which prompted him to express his niews about Muslim Nationalism. Muslims entered the subcontinent as conquerors and thereafter ruled here for about nine centuries. During this long period,

the muslims scattered all over the subcontinent and alongwith them their specific cultural heritage. As the time passed, one dynasty was replaced by another. But after the death of the last great moghul emperor Aurangzeb, there was no single effective ruler in the subcontinent who could stop the onslaught of the British. The whole of the subcontinent was subdivided into greater or smaller states ruled by princes either absolutely independent or only formally accepting the authority of practically powerless moghul king at Delhi. The British fully exploited the differences between the rulers of different states to the maximum benefit of their own. The war of independence of 1857 was only a half hearted attempt by the muslims to overthrow the British yoke. Muslims, having ruled the subcontinent for so long, could not easily reconcile themselves with the changed circumstances. After 1857, the political prestige and importance of the muslims of India came to a very low ebb, and, following their political fall, their economic and social life deteriorated. This situation was fully made use of by the hindus who prospered day and night. Besides, the system of education which was introduced by the British in the subcontinent denied all the chances of progress to the muslims. But in these adverse circumstances Syed Ahmed Khan came to the rescue of his people. He was convinced that the political and the economic prosperity of the muslims could be achieved only by the absorption of western learning and science and

by reconciliation with the British. He was also the first person who used the word "nation" instead of a community for the muslims of India.

Syed Ahmed Khan's ideas, the activity of the educational societies he founded, and the Aligarh College exerted a direct influence on the formation of Iqbal's views. Iqbal knew and understood the opinions of Syed Ahmed Khan on the partiotic unity of hindus and muslims, which belonged to the first period of his educational activity."[1] Iqbal accepted his idea of the necessity of vigorous action by man in the name of social good, by which Syed Ahmed Khan meant primarily the good of the muslims. But Iqbal did not share his desire to isolate the muslims from the all-Indian movement on the grounds that the representatives of the various religious communities in India allegedly had no common national interest."[2] Until 1905, when he went to Europe for the first time to continue his education, Iqbal had devoted his main attention to the passionate preaching of the national unity transcending all religious barriers without which it was impossible, in his words, to realise the wonderful ideals of freedom and independence. However, the contradictoriness of his nationalistic views was manifested in the fact that while fighting to overcome religious barriers, he remained above all a deeply

1. Hafeez Malik, *Iqbal : The Poet-Philosopher of Pakistan*, p. 110.
2. Ibid.

committed muslim. In many respects this circumstance determined the future evolution of his views.

Iqbal's first trip to Europe (1905-1908) intensified his commitment to Islam as the chief means of achieving his national ideals. After his return from Europe (1909) the ideology of Muslim Nationalism founded even clearer expression in his religio-philosophical and poetic work. At its base was the ideal that spiritual unity founded on Islam was the most important integral feature of national society. Islam emerges in this ideology as a form of national unity and (in essence) absorbs political thought. "Historically speaking, the ideology of Muslim Nationalism preceded the spread of the ideas of pan-Islamism, which asserted the necessity of unity on the basis of Islam irrespective of state, territorial, ethnic and national difference."[3]

Although Iqbal was concerned about the fate of India as a whole, but he was especially worried about the place of the muslims in India on account of the overwhelming numerical majority as well as the material prosperity of hindus till the end of his days. He shared with the Indian muslims their feeling of desolation at finding them faced both with political bondage and spiritual and economic poverty. He felt very deeply that Islam as he saw it practised was not as it was meant to be. He protested against those who failed to understand or deliberately dis-

3. Op. cit., p. 114.

torted the true spirit of Islam. Although he wished to see peace and goodwill between various religious communites in India, he could no longer think of an Indian nation, in view, of India's infinite variety in climates, races, languages, creeds, social systems and cultural patterns. Soon after his return to India Iqbal wrote :

> "Islam is something more than a creed, it is also a community, a Millat, a Nation. The membership of Islam as a community is not determined by birth, locality or naturalisation. The expression "Indian Mohammedan", however convenient it may be, is a contradiction in terms ; since Islam in its essence is above all conditions of time and space. Nationality with us is a pure idea, it has no geographical basis. But inasmuch as the average man demands a material centre of nationality, the muslim looks for it in the holy town of Mecca, so that the basis of muslim nationality combines the real and the ideal, the concrete and the abstract".[4]

Thus Iqbal arrives, at what is perhaps the most significant idea in his political philosophy—the extra-territorial, supranational character of muslim Millat. The first corollary of this idea is the rejection of a social order which is subject to the limitation of territory or is nationalistic in outlook. But Iqbal was against rejecting anything outrightly. He recognised that "the idea of nationality is certainly a healthy factor in the growth of communities".[5] Iqbal

4. S. A. Vahid, *Thoughts and Reflections of Iqbal*, p. 51.
5. Javed Iqbal, *Stray Reflections*, p. 95.

also believed that it was not always necessary to reject Nationalism for it was not always inconsistent or incompatible with Islam. For Iqbal :

> "It comes into conflict with Islam only when it begins to play the role of a political concept and claims to be a principle of human solidarity demanding that Islam should recede to the background of a mere private opinion and cease to be a living factor in the national life. In Turkey, Persia, Egypt and other muslim countries it will never become a problem. In these countries the muslims constitute an overwhelming majority and their minorities i.e., Jews, Christians and Zoroastrians, according to the law of Islam, are either "People of the Book" or "like the People of the Book", with whom the law of Islam allows free alliances. It becomes a problem for the muslims only in countries where they happen to be a minority, and nationalism demands their complete self-effacement. In majority countries, Islam accommodates nationalism, for there Islam and nationalism are practically identical. In minority countries it is justified in seeking self-determination as a cultural unit. In either case, it is thoroughly consistent with itself".[6]

It was during the nineteenth century, that nationalism became an ideology and almost a faith with fanaticism of a religion, which despite its disadvantages is still a potent factor in the affairs of the civilised humanity. It demands the same sense of loyalty which is reserved for religion, and has demanded the same sacrifices, perhaps even more than religion has

6. S. A. Vahid, *Thoughts and Reflections of Iqbal*, pp. 287-88.

from its adherents. Herbert Luthy has summed up the ideological aspects of nationalism in the following words :—

> "Every attempted definition of the "Nation" "the Nationalist idea" or 'National feeling" ends in mysticism or mystification, it can only be expressed in images and symbols—flags, myths, totem animals folklore, cults, rites—representing a sense of belonging to one collective body of individuals essentially different from individuals of any other collective body which is rationally inexpressible".[7]

"The greatest benefits that seem to have accrued to mankind from nationalism are a sense of purpose, a spirit of sacrifice, courage to defend ideals, and a strong incentive for progress, which probably no other ideological or spiritual force has achieved in the history of the west."[8] But at the same time one must not forget the darker aspects of Nationalism. "Nationalism with an object to perpetuate itself does not hesitate to fabricate historical fictions and racial myths. In its achievements, place of pride is given to the military conquests, and it consolidates its position by nurturing hatred against other national units. Moreover its greatest glories are acquired through territorial expansion. Apart from the acquisition of colonies, even among themselves, the European nations have fought some of the most murderous

7. K. A. Jalenski, *History and Hope: Tradition, Secpticism and Fanaticism in Modern Society*, p. 85.

8. Dr. Parveen Feroze Hasan, *The Political Philosophy of Iqbal*, p. 184.

wars in the name of nationalism."[9] Walter Lacquer has pointed out the defects of Nationalism in the following words :

> "Nationalism is distinguished by over-estimation of one's own nation and the denigration of others, the lack of the spirit of self-criticism and responsibility, an ambivalent appraisal of the destiny of one's nation based on a feeling of inferiority, and a general tendency to attribute anything wrong with one's nation to the evildoing of others, who should consequently be fought".[10]

"The mystical and territorial aspects of nationalism may often prove harmful to the general interest of the humanity at large. Its emotionalism has been a source of endless conflicts and aggression, and has robbed men of rationality and understanding which are so essential for the preservation of world peace".[11] Iqbal's antipathy to western nationalism was due to the ravages of fierce nationalism he had witnessed in the west. Nationalism was considered by Iqbal to be subtle form of idolatry; a deification of a material object, and consequently, what is to be demolished by Islam could not be made the very principle of its structure as a political community. Iqbal had a firm faith in the all embracing sovereignty of God Whose jurisdiction is above all worldly differences. Therefore the word "sovereign" being

9. Op. cit., pp. 185-86.
10. Walter Lacquet, *Communism and Nationalism in Middle East*, p. 8.
11. S. A. V. Moeeni, *Maqalat-i-Iqbal*, pp. 120-21.

associated with entities like state or nation was unthinkable for him. He was convinced that while belief in the sovereignty of God ensures peace and harmony in the affairs of humanity, the territorially-bound nations equipped with sovereignty only lead to war, aggression and international anarchy. The Millat formed on the basis of the teachings of the Quran and Sunnah of the Holy Prophet, on the very first day of the advent of Islam, has been continuously in existence ; its life has not been interrupted by a single day and its institutions are working all the time without any break. The deep similarity which exists at present among Muslims all over the world in respect of their beliefs, modes of teaching, ethical standards and values, acts of worship and mundane affairs, and in their social concepts and ways of life is positive proof of the fact that this society was established on a Sunnah and that tradition has continued without interruption throughout these long centuries.

Iqbal felt strongly about preservation of Muslims' cultural identity. He stated unequivocally, "that which really matters is a man's faith, his culture, his historical tradition. These are the things which, in my eye, are worth living for and dying for, and not the piece of earth with which the spirit of men happens to be temporarily associated. Referring to Nehru's concept of organic nationalism, Iqbal asserted that if Nehru stood for "the fusion of communities in a

biological sense", he would not subscribe to such a notion. This would have destroyed the entity of Muslim collective life in India, completely thwarting the realisation of Iqbal's ideal. Political power for Iqbal was a means to an end (the end being the preservation of Muslim cultural identity by promoting the creation of Muslim Nationhood or Millat-i-Islamia), and not an end in itself.

Explaining the concept of Muslim Nationalism Mohammad Asad says :

> "Nationalism in all its forms and disguises runs counter to the fundamental Islamic principles of equality of all men and must, therefore, be emphatically ruled out as a possible basis of Muslim unity. According to Quran and Sunnah, that unity must be of an ideological nature, transcending all consideration of race and origin, a brotherhood of people bound together by nothing but their consciousness of a common faith and a common moral outlook. In teachings of Islam, it is such a community of ideals alone that can provide a justifiable basis for all human groupment ; whereas on the other hand, the placing of the real or imaginary interests of one's nation or country above moral considerations has been condemned by the Prophet in the sharpest terms : "He is not of us who proclaims the cause of tribal partisanship, and he is not of us who fights the cause of tribal partisanship, and he is not of us who dies in the cause of tribal partisanship".[12]

If the word "nationalism" is to be used at all in Muslim political thought, it should be used in an

12. Mohd Asad, *Principles of State and Government in Islam*, p. 32.

entirely different meaning from what it means in the West. In Muslim thought it means universal oneness of the Muslims regardless of geographical distances and racial disparities. At one stage of Islamic history it meant both political and religious unity. However, the political unity of the Muslims did not last very long, but spiritual unit continued to exist till the abolition of Khilafat in 1924. Since then the position is that the Muslim world has been divided strictly on the basis of territorial nationalism, which is contrary to the basic precepts of Islam.

About dualism of Church and State, Iqbal says :

> "Primitive Christianity was founded, not as a political or civil unit, but, as a monastic order in a profane world having nothing to do with civil affairs, and obeying the Roman authority practically in all matters. The result of this was that when the State became Christian, State and Church confronted each other as distinct powers with interminable boundary disputes between them. Such a thing could never happen in Islam ; for Islam was from the very beginning a civil society, having received from the Quran a set of simple legal principles which, like the twelve tables of the Romans, carried, as experience subsequently proved, great potentialities of expansion and development by interpretation. The Nationalist theory of State, therefore, is misleading inasmuch as it suggests a dualism which does not exist in Islam".[13]

If it had been possible to separate spirit from the

13. Mohd Iqbal, *Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, pp. 155-56.

body, then it would have been possible to separate the Church from the State. A British Catholic, for example, could owe spiritual allegiance to the Pope and temporal allegiance to the Queen of England. But in Islam the religious order could not be separated from the temporal order. But by this Iqbal did not mean the participation of the "mullas" in the administration of the country. In the Muslim state, he constantly stressed, there can be neither opposition between secular and spiritual authority nor assumption by the clergy of the state functions, since Islam, in Iqbal's words, has no clergy at all. To believe that "religion is the private affair of the individual, and has nothing to do with what is called man's temporal life", was to deny that "spirit and matter, Church and State, are organic to each other".[14] Islam as an extra-territorial and supranational polity was concerned with the total life of man and could not confine itself to its spiritual aspect alone.

Perhaps the most important political idea in the second part of *Bang-e-Dara* is that in Islam nationality is a pure idea, it has no geographical basis. The Prophet of Islam says, Iqbal taught, what determines the bounds of our nation is not oneness of state. This is not a rejection of nationalism, but a glimpse of a wider concept. Earlier Iqbal had visualised a unified India, but later on, he began to realise that unity, in order to be real and lasting, must spring from within ;

14. S. A. Vahid, *Thoughts and Reflections of Iqbal*, p. 163.

that is, it must be organic. Even if it were possible to impose some kind of unity on the naturally ill-adjusted communal groups in India, such a unity would not fulfil Iqbal's ideal. In his search for a group with an inner cohesion, Iqbal began to concentrate more and more on the Muslims. Iqbal considered Indian Muslims a nation. He stated in his famous presidential address at the 1939 session of the Muslim League in Allahabad, "Indeed the Muslims of India are the only people who can fully be described as a nation in the modern sense of the word". However, in his opinion, this did not mean that any religious community constituted a nation. Thus, the Hindus, in his words, "are not a nation, although this is what they are striving for". Iqbal emphasised many times that he would recognise only an ideology of religio-communal unity that was based on respect for the interests of other religious communities. This indicates that Iqbal's entire socio-political philosophy, and especially his concept of Muslim Nationalism, was permeated with profound humanism.

For Iqbal, "the ideal nation or millat does already exist in germ", but the germ had to grow. The incipient nation needed political guidance and intellectual direction. Iqbal provided this leadership, employing the philosophic concept of the individual ego and the collective ego of the Muslims treated as a Millat. "Just as in the individual life the acquisi-

tion of gain, protection against injury, determination for action, and appreciation of higher values, are all dependent upon the gradual development of ego-consciousness, its continuity, enhancement and consolidation, similarly the secret of the life of the nations and people depends on the same process, which can be described as the development, preservation and consolidation of the communal ego''.[15] Under what political and psycho logical conditions could the collective Muslim ego flourish? For Iqbal, in an environment in which the Islamic culture could not develop, the individual would not become "a living member of the Muslim Millat". In order that the individual may thoroughly assimilate the culture of Islam, the Islamic values must be institutionalised, which is not possible. Hence, the justification of the right of self-determination for the Muslims in lands where they are in a minority. But had Iqbal lived till after the creation of Pakistan, for him Pakistan would have been only a means to achieving a universal brotherhood of Muslims all over the world ; because Iqbal's view of a Muslim nation was not bound by territorial limit, but on the contrary it was a much broader concept. Only four and a half months ago before his death Iqbal reiterated his ideas in a New Year message broadcast on January 1, 1938 from Lahore Radio Station :

"National unity is not a very durable force. Only one

15. Op. cit., p. 162.

unity is dependable and that unity is brotherhood of man, which is above race, nationality, colour or language, and so long as this so-called democracy, this accursed nationalism and this degraded imperialism are not shattered ; so long as men do not demonstrate by their actions that they believe that the whole world is the family of God ; so long as distinctions of race, colour and geographical nationalities are not wiped out completely they will never be able to lead a happy and contented life, and the beautiful ideals of liberty, equality and fraternity will never materialise".[16]

Iqbal saw in the history of mankind an unending succession of deadly combats, blood feuds and internecine wars. He questioned himself whether it was possible to bring forth a community universal in character transcending all barriers of caste, colour, territory, and customs, the basis of whose collective life could be peace and good-will. Iqbal believed that Islamic Millat was such a community. Dickinson, while reviewing *Asrar-i-Khudi*, says : "Thus, while Mr. Iqbal's philosophy is universal, his application of it is particular and exclusive. Only Muslims are worthy of the Kingdom of God, and only they constitute the family of God. The rest of the world is either to be absorbed or to be excluded."[17] But perhaps, Dickinson, while accusing Iqbal of favouring only the Muslims, forgets that Iqbal was a Muslim who had the greatest regard and love for the Prophet of Islam. Dickinson also forgets that the great

16. Shamloo, *Speeches and statements of Iqbal*, p. 222.
17. Dickinson, *The Nation* (*Review of Asrar-t-Khudi*), p. 458.

Christian sage St. Augustine also considers only the Christians worthy to be included in his city of God to the absorption or exclusion of all other religious communities.

As regards the relationship of the individual and the Millat, Iqbal says that the community is a great blessing for an individual because it is in the community alone that an individual develops all his qualities of head and heart. But an individual gets respect and recogniton only by being member of a Millat, which takes shape through the individuals held together by a common faith. When an individual merges himself in the Millat, his life assumes an enormous character.[18] At another place he explains "that in the life of a Millat or Nation an individual has a transitory existence. His thoughts, hopes, conduct, physical and intellectual powers depend upon the Millat. He is only a partial manifestation of the collective life of the community, i.e. Millat as a whole. Millat is a separate being and is by no means merely a collection of individuals".[19] These thoughts of Iqbal are repeated in many of his verses. He says "that the existence of the individual is a mere illusion, while the existence of the Millat is a fundamental reality, and that one should keep one's relations with the Millat firm and stable in order to acquire greater strength and protec-

18. Mohd Iqbal, *Asrar-o-Rumuz*, pp. 97-98.
19. S. A. V. Moine, *Maqalat-i-Iqbal*, pp. 116-17.

tion."[20] The above-mentioned views may, perhaps, be one of the reasons as to why some critics of Iqbal accuse him, though wrongly, of preaching fascism, or, if it does not sound too self-contradictory, Islamic fascism ; while, the other reason may be his meeting with the head of fascist Italy, Mussolini, on one of his trips to Europe.

"Iqbal also saw nationalism as a weapon of European Imperialism meant to be used in Muslim countries to shatter the religious unity of Islam in pieces."[21] It is sometimes suggested that Iqbal repudiated nationalism because nationalism was a Western concept, and that he was opposed to all things Western. This is palpably untrue ; he has given many reasons for his attitude, and there is no reason to doubt them."[22] The narrowness of the political concept of nationalism was Iqbal's greatest difficulty in accepting it. "From nationalism thoughts naturally turn more towards the idea that mankind has been so sharply divided into nations that it is impossible to bring about unity among

20. Mohd Iqbal, *Bang-i-Dara*, p. 280.

ملت کے ساتھ رابطہ استوار رکھ
پیوستہ رہ شجر سے امید بہار رکھ

Bong-i-Dara, p. 210 :

فرد قائم ربط ملت سے ہے تنہا کچھ نہیں
موج ہے دریا میں اور بیرون دریا کچھ نہیں

21. Shamloo, *Speeches and Statements of Iqbal*, p. 224.
22. Hafeez Malik, *Iqbal : the Poet-Philosopher of Pakistan*, p. 146.

them".[23] Why did Iqbal move away from nationalism and towards the concept of Islamic community ? The psychological and religious orientation of Iqbal's early education offers a partial explanation. In order to appreciate Iqbal's dedication to the Islamic commuity, one must first grasp the concept of Millat (Islamic Community). Iqbal repeatedly stressed that it was not a narrow concept and in essence it was non-temporal and non-spatial. Millat is also characterised by its homogeneity. Ideally, Islam was a great unifying force ; the unity it could achieve would be a "true and living" unity. The law of Islam does not recognise the apparent natural differences of race, nor the historical differences of nationality. The political ideal of Islam consists in the creation of a people born of a free fusion of all races and nationalities. Nationality with Islam is not the highest limit of political development ; for the general principles of the laws of Islam rest on human nature, and not on the peculiarities of a particular people. The inner cohesion of such a nation would consist not in ethnic or geographical unity, not in the unity of language or social tradition, but in the unity of the religious and the political ideal ; or in the psychological fact of "like mindedness".[24] For Iqbal, "like-mindedness" was a necessary condition for the fulfilment of his ideal. The lack of this

23. Op. cit., p. 237.

24. S. A. Vahid, *Thoughts and Reflections of Iqbal*, p. 60.

"like-mindedness", implying the absence of unanimity of aims and purposes, as well as of mutual faith and goodwill, made Iqbal doubt the ideal of a nationhood for united India.

In present times, in order to create a really effective political unity of Islam, all Muslim countries must first become independent, politically as well as economically ; and, then in their totality they should range themselves under one head. Is such a thing possible at the present moment ? If not today, one must wait. "For the present, every Muslim nation must sink in her own deeper self, temporarily focus her vision on herself alone, until all are strong and powerful to form a living family of republics. A true and living unity, according to the nationalist thinkers, is not so easy to be achieved by a merely symbolical overlordship. It is truly manifested in a multiplicity of free independent units whose racial rivalries are adjusted and harmonised by the unifying bond of a common spiritual aspiration. It seems that God is slowly bringing home to us the truth that Islam is neither Nationalism nor Imperialism but a league of Nations which recognises artificial boundaries and racial distinctions for the facility of reference only and not for restricting the social horizon of its members".[25]

25. Mohd Iqbal, *Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, p. 159.

CHAPTER X

Iqbal on the Function of Art

Iqbal's concept of art is distinctive in many important respects. Rejecting the maxim of 'Art for art sake', he propounds a pragmatic theory of art. He has some predecessors in this view, no doubt ; still his attempt is singular in that the determining consequence in his case is the test of egohood : viz., only that art is acceptable which fosters the development of the ego. This is well in line with his chief philosophy. The author, on the basis of his knowledge of literature and philosophy, has rendered this aspect of Iqbal's philosophy of art adeptly. (*Editor*)

Generally, 'art' is considered to be an important element of any culture. As an art-production, it contributes to cultural enrichment and broadening of human horizons. As an instrument of socio-political and cultural change, it acts as a spur to the process of civilizational development. Though the term 'culture' can be understood as covering an enormous mass of what T. S. Eliot calls 'characteristic activities and interests of a people', artistic activity still stands out prominent among all the human pursuits. More recently, culture has come to

be identified exclusively, with a body of actual artistic and intellectual creation.

In an Islamic view, however, only secondary importance is ascribed to works of art and literature, since they are only incidental phenomena of culture. Not that Muslims had any aversion to literary, artistic and scientific achievements; it is only because, in the Islamic scheme of things art is meant for the betterment of life and is not to be idolised and worshipped. The latter tendency, in fact, was instrumental in fostering in early Islamic culture a discouraging attitude towards certain art-forms. Still, the discouragement of certain art-expressions and encouragement of others were both regarded as subsidiary to life. (This appears also to be the view Iqbal professed in his writings and acted upon in practice). "The culture of Islam aimed not at beautifying and refining the accessories of human life. It aimed at beautifying and exalting human life itself".[1] An adoration and idolization of art, clinging to the 'cold' beauty of the lifeless, is due, in large measure, to lack of faith in the modern man in the beauty of life as actually lived. In the face of this pessimism, Islam is courageously optimistic. It is not the 'optimism' lampooned by Voltaire in the person of Dr. Pangloss, who kept on exclaiming '*Tout est pour le mieux dans le moilleur des mondes*

1. Muhammad Marmaduke Pickthall, *The Cultural Side of Islam*, p. 3.

possibles'.[2] Islam is optimistic in the face of stark reality of this life. It does not advocate acceptance of the existing conditions as a necessary evil, rather it repeatedly exhorts man to undertake ceaseless struggle for improvement. It is in this context that Islam differs from the Western approach to culture wherein the fine works of art by a small minority of a community is considered an adequate justification for acclaiming the civilization of the community (even though an overwhelming majority of its members may be forced by the social order to lead ugly, servile and degraded lives).

Iqbal's concept of art develops in line with this vitalistic, dynamic philosophy of Islam. His main concern was to harness the forces of 'collective intuition' of the Muslim peoples and thereby to guide them to their lofty destination. His ultimate goal was the betterment of humanity as a whole. He had before him certain manifest ideals, and the most important among these was the control and domination over the forces of nature and, history both at the individual and social levels. The element of 'will-power' permeates the whole of his philosophy and he is genuinely convinced that the human life is endowed with unlimited possibilities, and that man, by strengthening his self (*khudi*), is capable of attaining supremacy over this universe. In order to give a practical shape to his convictions

2. 'All is for the best in the best of all possible words'.

he preferred the medium of poetry rather than logical arguments and rational discussions. Since poetic sensibility encompasses and co-ordinates all the dispersed and disintegrated forces of human ego, penetrates the very depths of his being, and consequently emerges as a 'spiritual unity', there can be no harm in using it in pursuit of noble ideals. In fact, the real greatness of an artist lies in the power that he possesses to make others participate in the intuitive flights of his transcendent experience.

So, Iqbal's view of art is based on his concern for human life at large. And the inspiration and support he claims, as in other spheres of thought, from the teachings of Islam. I will quote here, the concluding part of one of his articles published in *NEW ERA*, 28th July, 1917, entitled "Our Prophet's Criticism of Contemporary Arabian Poetry". The Prophet's appreciation of Antra's verse here gives Iqbal the ultimate principle for the proper evaluation of all art ;

> "The praise of an Arabian has never kindled in me a desire to see him, but I tell you I do wish to meet the author of this verse.[3]

> "Imagine the man, a single look at whose face was a source of infinite bliss to the looker desiring to meet an

3. The following verse of Antra of the tribe of Abs was appreciated and admired by the Prophet (Peace be upon him) :

ولقد ابيت على الطوى واظنه

حتى انبل بہ كريم الكامل

'Verily I pass through whole nights of toil to merit a livelihood worthy of an honourable man'.

> infidel Arab for his verse ! What is the secret of this unusual honour which the Prophet wished to give to the poet ? It is because the verse is so healthful and vitalising, it is because the poet idealises the pain of honourable labour. The Prophet's appreciation of this verse indicates to us another art-principle of great value—that art is subordinate to life, not superior to it. The ultimate end of all human activity is Life—glorious, powerful, exuberant. All human art must be subordinated to this final purpose and the value of everything must be determined in reference to its life-yielding capacity. The highest art is that which awakens our dormant will-force, and nerves us to face the trials of life manfully. All that brings drowsiness and makes us shut our eyes to reality around—on the mystery of which alone life depends—is a message of decay and death. There should be no opium-eating in Art. The dogma of Art for the sake of Art is a clever invention of decadence to cheat us out of life and power".[4]

In this perspective, it is not at all difficult to visualise Iqbal's theory of Art. The function of poetry, for him, is that it should be employed in the service of life. Life being the foundation and criterion of all human activity, genuine poetry cannot exist apart from life. He is fully aware, "there are religions and forms of art, which provide a kind of cowardly escape from the facts of life."[5] But these trends have no place in his system of thought. He has categori-

4. S. A. Vahid (*Ed.*) *Thoughts and Reflections of Iqbal*, pp. 85-86.

5. Allama Muhammad Iqbal, *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, p. 25.

cally put forth his standpoint in his 'Foreword' to *Muraqqa-i-Chughtai* :

> "I look upon Art as subservient to life and personality. I expressed this view as far back as 1914 in my *Asrar-i-Khudi*, and twelve years later in the poems of *Zabur-i-Ajam*. I have tried to picture the soul-movement of the ideal artist in whom Love reveals itself as a unity of Beauty and Power :
>
> دلبری بے قاهری جادوگری است
> دلبری با قاهری پیغمبری است[6]

So, the function and purpose of a true artist—poet, painter or musician, is to express in his art-form that which is beneficial for humanity.

It may be of interest here, to digress a little and consider the problem in the Western literary tradition. Way back in the past, the history of aesthetics might be summarised as a dialectic in which two important elements are Horace's *dulce* and *utile* : poetry as sweet and useful. However, when a work of art functions successfully, the two notes of pleasure and utility should not merely coexist but coalesce. Plato thought that poetry and art 'nourish and water our emotions when we ought to dry them up'. For Aristotle, the function of art is to relieve us from the pressure of emotions (*catharsis*). To express emotions is to get free of them, as Goethe is said to have freed himself from *Weltschmerz* by composing *The Sorrows of Werther*. The audience of a tragedy or the reader

6. Vahid, op. cit., p. 144.

of a drama is also said to experience release and relief. His emotions have been provided with a focus, leaving him, at the end of his aesthetic experience, with calmness and serenity.

In the contemporary era, one finds George Boas expositing a pluralism of interests to art-expressions. T. S. Eliot insists on the 'variety of poetry' and the variety of things this kind of poetry may do at various times. It is a fact that to take art or poetry seriously is to attribute to it some use proper to itself. Considering Arnold's view that poetry could supersede religion and philosophy, T. S. Eliot claims : ..."nothing in this world or the next is a substitute for anything else...."[7] In actual practice, however, art can take the place of many things—of travel in foreign lands, of direct experience, of vicarious living. It can also be made use by the historian as a social document. But has art a function, a use, which nothing else can do so well ? Or is it an amalgam of philosophy, history, music, painting, etc.

Poetry as a form of art is sometimes assigned the task of communicating knowledge. It may be true that poetry is more philosophical than history, since history 'relates things which have happened, poetry such as might happen', the general and probable. Moreover, as Max Eastman, himself a poet, denies that the 'literary mind' can, in an age of science, lay claim to the discovery of true knowledge, we may

7. T. S. Eliot, *Use of Poetry*, pp. 113, 155.

have to confine the cognitive value of art only to the psychological. When history, like literature, appears as a loose, ill-defined discipline, when science rather is the impressive rival, it may be claimed that literary art gives a knowledge only of those particularities with which science and philosophy are not concerned. While a Neo-Classicist like Dr. Johnson might think of poetry in terms of the 'grandeur' of generality, many stress the particularity of poetry (e.g. modern theorists like Bergson, Ransom, Gilby, Stace etc.). W. T. Stace has expressly stated that the play *Othello* is not about jealousy but about Othello's jealousy, the particular kind of jealousy a Moore married to a Venetian might feel.[8]

It is difficult to draw the line between views of poetry as realization of the given truth and views of poetry as 'artistic insight'. One thing is certain. A true art always helps in discovering new 'perceptual values, and new 'aesthetic qualities'. So, it cannot be a 'lie' as Plato purports to prove. In fact, the whole controversy about the meaning of the term 'art' takes on the character of a semantic analysis. What do we mean by 'knowledge', 'truth', 'cognition' ? If all truth is conceptual and propositional, then the arts cannot be forms of truth. Moreover, if positivist reductivist definitions are accepted, limiting truth to that which is methodically verifiable, then art cannot be a form of truth experimentally.

8. W.T. Stace, *The Meaning of Beauty*, p. 161.

This is the reason why MacLeish has attempted to blend the diverse claims of literary beauty and philosophical insight by the formula : a poem is 'equal to : not true' ; poetry has a serious function as philosophy and possesses the equivalence of truth. It is truth-like.

An important trend in the English literary tradition is to regard art as a sort of propaganda medium. With its popular connotation dominated by perniciousness and distrust, it can possibly be applied only to the lowest forms of art. No great or good art can in this sense be propaganda. If, however, we stretch the term to mean 'effort' to influence readers, to share one's attitude towards life-situations, then there is plausibility in the contention that all artists are propagandists or should be. Here, one may glance at what Montgomery Belgion has to say in this regard :

> "...every writer adopts a view or theory of life...The effect of the work is always to *persuade* the reader to accept that view or theory. This persuasion is always illicit. That is to say, the reader is always led to believe something, and that assent is hypnotic—the art of the presentation seduces the reader...."

This is Belgion's opinion about the 'irresponsible propagandist' acting as an artist. T.S. Eliot, who quotes Belgion, responds by distinguishing "poets whom it is a strain to think of as propagandists at all" from irresponsible propagandists, and a third group who, like Lucretius and Dante, are "particularly conscious

and responsible" propagandists. Eliot makes the judgement of responsibility dependent upon both auctorial intention and historic effect.[9] But, then, serious art implies a responsible view of life, which may be stated in philosophical terms and formulated as a system.

This brings us to the controversy about 'art for art's sake' as it unfolded itself around the middle of the nineteenth century, or more recent doctrines of *poesie pure*. Victor Hugo claims to have coined, for the first time in 1864, the phrase 'art for the sake of art'. Maybe, he was unaware, then, of Dr. Cousin's appreciation of this phrase under Kantian influence. He, in fact, made a very succinct distinction between the spheres of art and life. For him, art was not meant to serve either morality or religion. Its function was neither the generation of pleasure nor beneficence for humankind. He believed in art for art's sake, religion for religion's sake and morality for morality's sake. So, virtue and righteousness never leads to aestheticism. Neither can art lead to a life of puritanism. Art can lead us only on the path of art and nowhere else. This trend was popularised in France by Flaubert, Gautier and Baudelaire. Its protagonists in other countries were : Walter Pater and Oscar Wilde in England ; Edgar Allen Poe in the United States of America ; Pushkin in the U.S.S.R., and

9. T. S. Eliot, 'Poetry and Propaganda', *Literary Opinion in America* (ed. Zabel), p. 25.

Schlegel and Heine in Germany. Its opponents included among others men like Victor Hugo himself, Ruskin and Tolstoy, etc. The controversy assumed bizarre proportions in due course of time and heated discussions took place all over Europe whether art is for the sake of art or for the sake of life.

Now, what were the prevailing trends in the Indian sub-continent during 18th and 19th centuries *A.D.* Apparently, subjective and personal bias predominated most of the verse composed during that time. Every poet appears to be pre-occupied with petty love-themes depicting his personal love-affairs and infatuations. Men of letters were generally not very well off. They required wealthy *Nawabs* and princes to patronise their 'courtly' habits. Urdu poet, in particular, was primarily a court-poet. The court itself presented a typical picture of deteriorating governmental standards and all accompanying evils had gathered around this high seat of authority. This situation found a true reflection in our Urdu verse. The beloved was shown as employing an attendant—a cruel watchdog for numerous, competing lovers. Within (the beloved's court) there was an abundance of rivals, indulging in pettey squabbles. Like the King's court here too, the beloved took delight in these trivialities—behaving like 'mighty' Emperor *sans* power—conceited, vainglorious, proud and supremely un-rivalled ruler of no empire. With a mere gesture of an eyebrow he could remove anybody and everybody from his presence, from this world even.

It was a superficial, false form of poetry which depicted a pretentious world of make-believe. The poet was preoccupied with trying to escape the hard and often cruel realities of this life. He was taking refuge in a 'world of ideas' of his own making. This type of art is in a proper position to trace and unravel the mysteries of this life. Instead it closed its eyes from real, hard facts. The poets failing to find favour with the court luminaries, found shelter in the immature, half-baked mysticism and opted for an ascetic way of life. The cultural milieu of the sub-continent, at that time, was characterised by superstition, cheap religiosity, ascetic mysticism, inaction, pretentiousness, ceremony and, above all, total negation of self.

The so-called modern movement in the sub-continental poetic tradition emerged after 1857 War of Independence. The change in value-system is visible in Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan, Altaf Hussain Hali and their contemporaries. Hadi Hussain points out the changing socio-cultural patterns thus :

> "In Urdu literature Iqbal found the ground prepared for his purposive view of poetry by Hali, author of a long poem (Mussadas) bewailing the cultural, political, and economic decline of Indian Muslims and of a treatise on poetry (*Muqqadma Sh'rwa Sha'ri*) criticising the highly artificial traditions of Urdu poetry and its concentration upon undignified and immoral erotic

themes."[10]

But, even this new poetry has little to offer as far as it failed to truly portray the anguish and concern and anxiety of a nation enslaved and colonised and shattered by the consciousness of disintegrated Empire. Even now, a sense of grief prevails over more healthy emotion of anger at being cheated of one's right to live freely. It is in this literary situation that Iqbal has to be correctly appreciated :

> "Iqbal carried the movement initiated by Hali out of the ivory tower of pure aestheticism in which Urdu poets had been living for generations, as if in a fool's paradise, while vast political and social changes had been taking place around them."[11]

Iqbal, with unwavering determination, pulled Urdu poetry out of the slough of its decadence. He was very clear about the necessities of a new poetry and a new art and what it should be most concerned about.

For Iqbal, the true aim of all art is enrichment of human life and human self. The art that fails to contribute to the fullness and exuberance of life is meaningless for him. In his 'Foreword' to *Muraqqa-i-Chughtai*, he is very explicit :

> "The spiritual health of a people largely depends on the kind of inspiration which their poets and artists

10. Hafeez Malik, *Iqbal : Poet-Philosopher of Pakistan*, p. 346. ("Conception of Poetry and the Poet" by Hadi Hussain).
11. Ibid., p. 346.

receive. But inspiration is not a matter of choice. It is a gift, the character of which cannot be critically judged by the recipient before accepting it. It comes to the individual unsolicited, and only to socialise itself. For this reason the person, the personality that receives, and the life-quality of that which is received, are matters of the utmost importance for mankind. The inspiration of a single decadent, if his art can lure his fellows to his song or picture, may prove more ruinous to a people than whole battalions of an Attila or a Changez. As the Prophet of Islam said of Imra'ul Qais—the greatest poet of pre-Islamic Arabia :

اشعر الشعرا و قاید هم الی النار

To permit the visible to shape the invisible, to seek what is scientifically called adjustment with nature is to recognise her mastery over the spirit of man. Power resisting her stimuli, and not from exposing ourselves to create what ought to be, is health and life. All else is decay and death. Both God and man live by perpetual creation.

حسن را از خود برون جستن خطا ست
آنچه می بایست پیش ما کجا ست

The artist who is a blessing to mankind defies life. He is an associate of God and feels the contact of Time and Eternity in his soul. In the words of Fichte, he "sees all Nature full, large and abundant as opposed to him who sees all things thinner, smaller and emptier than they actually are". The modern age seeks inspiration from Nature. But Nature simply 'is' and her function is mainly to obstruct : our search for 'Ought', which the artist must discover within the deeps of his own being.

And in so far as the cultural history of Islam is con-

cerned it is my belief that, with the single exception of Architecture, the art of Islam (Music, Painting and even Poetry) is yet to be born—the art, that is to say, which aims at the human assimilation of Divine attributes تخلقو باخلاق الله gives man infinite aspiration اجر غیر ممنون, and finally wins for him the status of God's Representative on earth.

مقام آدم خاکی نهاد دریا بند
مسافران حرم خدا دهد توفیق[12]

This exalted place can be achieved through perpetual struggle which generates tension in the development of one's personality (self). Thus, we have a pragmatic test of art. Art that fortifies and strengthens the ego is wholesome and desirable, and art which undermines its perpetual growth is unhealthy and harmful. The aim of true art is to serve life and to make it glorious, beautiful and rich. The real function of all artistic activity is not merely to create amusement or to give delight, but to awaken in man dynamic and vital impulses. According to Iqbal, then, the justification of poetry is that it can be employed in the service of life—to communicate to people what is useful and essential for the coming stage of human evolution. Poetry and literature, for him, are mere tools devised by life-force to impress upon the humanity what the geniuses have to say to them.

Now, since art is not something separated from life, it is essential for the artist to try to be in close

12. S. A. Vahid, op. cit., pp. 144-46.

communion with life. Only by being one with life-force can a poet express his experience of life authentically. A decadent art is completely cut off from realities of life and such creations are always lifeless, unreal and superficial. Such an art destroys old values without evolving new ones. On the other hand, a true artist discovers new worlds in the common facts of life. He presents his intuitive experience in the form of a living and creative reality. It is in such artistic expression that truth and beauty become one and indistinguishable.

شاعر دل نواز بھی بات اگر کہے کھری
ہوتی ہے اس کے فیض سے مزرع زندگی ہری
شان خلیل ہوتی ہے اس کے کلام سے عیاں
کرتی ہے اس کی قوم جب اپنا شعار آذری
اہل زمین کو نسخۂ زندگی دوام ہے
خون جگر سے تربیت پاتی ہے جو سخنوری
گلشن دہر میں اگر جوئے مئے سخن نہ ہو
پھول نہ ہو، کلی نہ ہو، سبزہ نہ ہو، چمن نہ ہو

—*Asif Iqbal Khan*

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